INTERPRETIVE ESSAY

The *Republic* is the true *Apology* of Socrates, for only in the *Republic* does he give an adequate treatment of the theme which was forced on him by Athens' accusation against him. That theme is the relationship of the philosopher to the political community.

Socrates was accused of doing unjust things—of not believing in the gods which the city believed in and of corrupting the youth. These charges do not relate simply to the man Socrates who happens to be a philosopher but are meant to be a condemnation of the philosophic activity itself—and not on behalf simply of the city of Athens, but on behalf of the political community as such. From the city's point of view, there seems to be something about the thought and way of life of the philosopher which calls into question the city's gods, who are the protectors of its laws, and which hence makes him a bad citizen, or rather no citizen at all. Such a man's presence in the city and his association with the most promising young men make him a subversive. Socrates is unjust not only because he breaks Athens' laws but also because he apparently does not accept those fundamental beliefs which make civil society possible.

Philosophy required a defense if it was to be admitted into civil society. At the time of Socrates' trial, philosophy was new to the cities, and it could easily have been crushed. The philosopher had to defend himself before the city, or the city would have been legitimated in discouraging philosophy's entrance into it as vigorously as possible. Socrates' trial was the crisis of philosophy, and its life was at stake. And, contrary to what modern men might be inclined to believe, it is not simply clear that philosophy is salutary, or even harmless, for the city. Socrates indicates this by the fact that he is at pains in the *Apology* to distinguish himself from other philosophers. He seems to agree that it is somewhat questionable whether a city which wants its suns to care for it should permit them to consort with philosophers.

The city sees only the apparent atheism of the philosopher and his effect on the young; the poet Aristophanes, who ridiculed Socrates in the *Clouds* and paved the way for his later official accusation, shows why the philosopher is subversive. He depicts Socrates as a man "who has investigated all the things in the air and under the earth and who makes the weaker argument stronger." The meaning of this charge is that the philosopher studies nature, particularly the heavens, and there he finds a true account of the celestial phenomena differing widely from that given in the religious myths; for example, he learns of a purely mechanical explanation of Zeus' thunderbolt. The philosopher's contemplation of the heavens dissolves the perspective of the city, the laws of which now seem to be mere conventions with no natural status. His way of life turns him from the duties of citizenship, and what he learns teaches him to despise the human, political things. What is more, the philosopher's understanding of the causes of all things makes it impossible for him to grasp man on his own level; man is reduced to nonman, the political to the subpolitical. The philosophers are alienated from the human things, which only poetry can adequately reproduce. The poet, in a more profound way, joins the city in its condemnation of philosophy as an enemy of political man.

Socrates must show, then, that the philosopher is just and that it is he, not the poet, who is the one able to treat of political things responsibly. This is not easy to do since it would appear that the philosopher calls into question the natural character of justice as a virtue and that his science of being has no special place for man in it. The *Apology* does not adequately accomplish this task, since it is a description of Socrates' life directed to a large, hostile audience composed of generally ignorant jurors sworn to uphold the defective laws of Athens. The *Republic*, on the other hand, is a leisurely discussion among cultivated, friendly men. The *Apology*, in which Socrates defends himself against the charge of injustice, makes no attempt to define justice: his accusers mean by an unjust man one who breaks the laws; and Socrates' justice is surely not that of a law-abiding man. Only the *Republic* makes the attempt to define justice and elaborate the science which can give ground to such a definition. In it, Socrates-who had argued in the *Apology* that his only knowledge was ignorance and who had thus apparently admitted his incompetence in political things—presents a teaching about the nature of things political.

That teaching culminates in the famous declaration that "unless philosophers rule as kings, or those now called kings and chiefs genuinely and adequately philosophize . . . there is no rest from ills for the cities . . . nor, I think, for human kind. . . ." This means that there is a perfect harmony between philosophy and the city, science and society. Socrates has reformed philosophy so that it is now the one thing most needful for the city; and the philosopher is its greatest benefactor. We

are, however, likely to be misled by this apparent Socratic optimism concerning the best case—the regime where philosophers rule. Careful reading will reveal that this alleged harmony is more of a paradox than a solution, that it covers a host of tensions which come to light in the less than perfect cases. Socrates may well have reformed philosophy so that it was no longer indifferent to politics, but it was certainly no less subversive of all existing regimes than was the older philosophy. If philosophers are the natural rulers, they are the rivals of all the actual rulers; philosophy, rather than being simply useless, seems to be conspiratorial. Philosophy may very well be harmful to real regimes, and it is very unlikely that the regime at which it aims can come into being. In fact, the *Republic* tacitly admits the truth of the charges made against Socrates: he is not orthodox in his beliefs about the gods and sets up new beings, the *ideas*, which are superior to the gods; the philosophers he trains will be men who both know the nature of things in the air and below the earth and are able to speak with consummate skill; and he teaches young men to despise Athens because he teaches them to love a regime in which philosophers are kings. Socrates denies that he is unjust because of this, but there must be a revolution in men's understanding of justice for just deeds to be recognized as such. In all imperfect regimes, his presence is problematic, and he must behave prudently: he undermines the attachment to the regime and laws of the city, but he is the salvation of all those in it who wish to live the good life.

The *Republic* shows us why Socrates was accused and why there was good reason to accuse him. Not only does he tell us about the good regime, but we see his effect on the young men he was said to have corrupted. Socrates, in leading them to a justice which is not Athenian, or even Greek, but is rather human, precisely because it is rational, shows the way to the truth about political things and develops the extremely complex relationship of that truth to civil society. These questions are most relevant to modern man, although they are perhaps harder for him to understand than for men of any previous generation. They are relevant to him because he admits his need for "values" and because the progress of publicly useful science now threatens him with destruction; they are harder for him to understand because he has been taught that "values" cannot be established by reason and that science is simply salutary for society.

For these reasons it behooves us to study the *Republic*. For it is the first book which brings philosophy "down into the cities"; and we watch in it the foundation of political science, the only discipline which can bring the blessings of reason to the city. We will learn that the establishment of political science cannot be carried out without sacrifice of the dearest convictions and interests of most men; these sacrifices are so great that to many they do not seem worthwhile: one of the most civilized cities which has ever existed thought it better to sacrifice philosophy in the

person of Socrates rather than face the alternative he presented. This is why philosophy needs an *apology*; it is a dangerous and essentially questionable activity. Socrates knew that his interests were not, and could not be, the interests of most men and their cities. We frequently do not see this and assume that his execution was a result of the blind prejudices of the past. Therefore we do not see the true radicalness of the philosophic life. The *Republic* is the best antidote to our prejudice. The proper starting point for the study of Socratic philosophy is the nonphilosophic orientation of the city within which philosophy must take its place. Hostility to philosophy is the natural condition of man and the city. Socrates, in admitting his guilt, will show what higher concerns pardon him for it.

(*327a–328b*) As in the *Apology* the city compels Socrates to speak and defend himself, so in the *Republic* a group of men compels Socrates to remain with them and finally to give an account of himself. Apparently he does not wish to do so; other activities might be more to his taste, and he would like to hurry to them. But these men who accost him have power, and Socrates must adjust to them. If he cannot carry on his preferred activities unimpeded by the need for a compromise with his fellows, he must earn their good will and teach them to respect his tastes. Otherwise he would have to give up his way of life. He will only give as much of himself as is required to regain his freedom. This situation is a paradigm of the relation of the philosopher to the city. The difference between the *Republic* and the *Apology* is that the threat of compulsion used in the *Republic* is only playful while that of the Athenian law court in the *Apology* is in deadly earnest. In the *Apology* Socrates is condemned to death because a compromise acceptable to the people would have meant his spiritual death; in the *Republic*, dealing with a different audience, he emerges as the ruler of a tamed city which may not understand him but which is at least willing to permit him the unbridled pursuit of philosophy and access to the noble youth.

Socrates had accompanied Glaucon to the Piraeus both to pray and to see; he was motivated by piety and by theory—in the primitive and most revealing sense of that term, idle curiosity. The Athenians were introducing a new goddess into their cult. Socrates hints that it is the Athenians who bring in new divinities; if he, too, does so, he only imitates the democracy, with which he has more kinship than appears on the surface. (Adeimantus finally persuades Socrates to stay in the Piraeus by the promise of another innovation: a torch race on horseback. The conversation, also an innovation and itself innovating, takes the place of that torch race and is parallel to it. Socrates has a taste for newness which is antithetical to the best political orders and which he shares with the democracy. The difference between Athenian and Socratic tastes, however, can be measured by the difference

between a torch race in honor of the goddess and a friendly discussion about justice.) Socrates' piety brings him down to the Piraeus with Glaucon and puts him into the situation where he must discuss the city, and that piety disposes him to care for the city. But his piety is somewhat lax; it is open to change and mixed with curiosity. He does not tell us the result of his prayers, but his observations led him to the recognition that the Athenian procession was no better than that of the Thracians. Socrates' theory stands above the enthusiasm of national pride and is somehow beyond mere citizenship. His piety belongs to the city; his thought does not.

Polemarchus sees him hurrying off and orders a slave to order him to stay. This little scene prefigures the three-class structure of the good regime developed in the *Republic* and outlines the whole political problem. Power is in the hands of the gentlemen, who are not philosophers. They can command the services of the many, and their strength is such that they always hold the philosophers in their grasp. Therefore it is part of the philosophers' self-interest to come to terms with them. The question becomes: to what extent can the philosophers influence the gentlemen? It is this crucial middle class which is the primary object of the *Republic* and the education prescribed in it. In this episode, the first fact is brute force, leading to the recognition that no matter how reasonable one may be, everything depends upon the people's willingness to listen. There is a confrontation here between wisdom, as represented by Socrates, and power, as represented by Polemarchus and his friends. At first the opposition of the two principles is complete, but Adeimantus and Polemarchus try to make Socrates choose to remain by offering him pleasant occupations if he does so. Glaucon accepts on behalf of his friend, and Socrates grudgingly gives in to the *fait accompli*. Hence wisdom and power reach a compromise, and a miniature community is formed. This accomplished, they take a vote and ratify their decision, and a new principle of rule emerges: consent. It is a mixture of powerless wisdom and unwise power. All political life will be founded on such compromises, more or less satisfactory, until the means can be discovered to permit the absolute rule of wisdom. Since he is forced to become a member of this community, Socrates soon establishes himself as its ruler by overcoming the other aspirants to the office, and then he proceeds to found a political regime in which philosophers will rule.

(*328b–331d*) Having made their social contract, the members of the group go to Polemarchus' house where they find his father, Cephalus, who dominates the scene, and who does so precisely because he is the father. Age is his title to rule, as it is in almost all regimes governed by ancestral custom. Age is a practical substitute for wisdom because, unlike wisdom, it is politically recognizable and easily defined.

It is more feasible to teach force to respect age than to teach it to respect wisdom. The reverence for age, and hence antiquity, is one of the strongest ties which can bind a civil society together. But in order to carry on a frank discussion about justice, this reverence must be overcome, and the philosopher must take the place of the father at the center of the circle. Socrates must induce Cephalus to leave the scene, because Cephalus is beyond reason, and it would be impious to dispute him.

Once authority has been banished, Socrates and his companions can begin a critical examination of the ancestral code, of the conventional view of justice. This is the burden of the rest of Book I. All traditional opinions are discredited; and unaided reason, free of limiting prejudices, can begin the search for an understanding of justice which is not merely opinion. This criticism is a destructive activity in the name of liberation. It is a perilous undertaking for men who must remain members of civil society and could not properly take place under the eyes of Cephalus. He stands for those restraints on body and soul which are essential to the preservation of the city. There are certain uncomfortable issues, the raising of which usually indicates an inclination to vice on the part of those who do so. The practice of posing the extreme questions is a bad one, for one of its necessary consequences is corruption of the habits of the virtues. The only justification for questioning the old way would be that as a result a new, superior, way which Cephalus does not know of might emerge. The ancestral is by its nature silent about its own foundations; it is an imposing presence that awes those who might be tempted to look too closely.

Cephalus typifies the ancestral which cannot, but must, be questioned. Although his appearance is brief, by means of a few circumspect inquiries Socrates manages to reveal his character and his principles and, hence, those of the tradition he represents. Then the old man is delicately set aside. He is a father in the fullest sense—he was once very erotic and he possesses a considerable store of money. He presents himself as a lover of speeches, and thereby a friend of Socrates. But he loves speeches only in his old age, and it is doubtful whether he considers that his prime. The passions of youth led him to bodily pleasures, and it is only with the body's decline that he turns to the things of the soul. For Cephalus, speeches are a way of spending his old age, for Socrates they constitute the highest human activity. Cephalus' youthful passions, however appealing, seem to have led him into activities that are contrary to justice, and his old age is spent worrying about them and atoning for them. Thus, from the point of view of justice, *eros* is a terrible thing, a savage beast. For a man like Cephalus, life is always split between sinning and repenting. Only by the death of *eros* and its charms can such a gentleman become fully reliable, for his *eros* leads neither to justice nor philosophy but to intense, private bodily satisfaction.

Cephalus says that it is character, an attribute of the soul, which enables him to be contented in old age. Socrates poses a rather crude question: doesn't money help? Aren't the things with which Cephalus is concerned really tied to money? Isn't the insistence on character merely a way of hiding the fact of dependence on money and of attributing one's happiness to oneself rather than to the true material source of one's well being? Must not the overriding concern of private men, families and cities be the acquisition of wherewithal? The answer is yes and no. Cephalus would be very different and much less happy without money; he is not like Socrates who is poor and needs nothing more. But Cephalus is not a simple money-maker. Money is necessary, but it frees him for the fulfillment of certain family and religious duties which sublimate his life. He inherits the money and whatever improprieties were committed in the first making of it are lost in the mists of time. It would be unseemly, and lead to an undue concentration on money if one were to insist too much on its importance. Characteristic of Cephalus and men like him is a salutary forgetting of the preconditions of their kind of life.

The greatest good Cephalus has enjoyed from money is the avoidance of injustice and impiety. Here for the first time we touch on the subject which is to become the theme of the *Republic*. The question of money seems to lead him to the question of justice. The old man is afraid of punishment after death, so he does not want to depart owing debts to men or sacrifices to gods, or having cheated or deceived anyone. With his money he can pay his debts and offer his sacrifices, and because he possesses money he is not so dependent on others that he need deceive in order to stay alive. The tales told by the poets about punishments in another world for injustices committed in this one concerned Cephalus little when he was younger. He was inclined to laugh them off; accordingly, he worried little about injustices he might be committing. Only as death and death's perspective approaches does fear cause him to become concerned about his duties to men and gods. He is not sure that there are such punishments or even that he had really done unjust deeds, but prudence counsels a punctilious attention to his accounts with men and gods. Justice is a matter of self-interest: one should care about others if there are gods who defend justice.

In response to Cephalus' moving account of how he wishes to use his money in such a way as to live out his life in justice and piety, Socrates becomes argumentative. Instead of encouraging the old man in his laudable intentions, Socrates as much as tells him that he does not know what justice is and thereby undermines his life. This is one of the most decisive moments of the dialogue, for, with his question, Socrates takes command of the little community, forces Cephalus to leave, and makes the nature of justice the problem of the discussion. Socrates acts as though Cephalus had tried to define justice and objects to the definition he

himself constructs out of Cephalus' statement. Justice, according to Socrates' rendition of Cephalus' view, is telling the truth and paying one's debts. Socrates' procedure is quite strange. In the first place he says nothing about half of what interests Cephalus: he does not mention piety, whether this is because he thinks Cephalus' understanding of piety is adequate or because he is not interested in piety. Second, in his discussion of paying one's debts, Socrates is silent about the gods and the sacrifices owed to them. In a word, Socrates forgets the divine, which is Cephalus' prime preoccupation, and makes the discussion one concerning human justice alone. This, along with his unwillingness to face the fact that he might be ignorant of the very obligations he is trying so hard to meet, is what causes Cephalus to leave. While the discussion is going on, he is elsewhere performing sacrifices to the gods, concerned with what is forgotten in that discussion.

Socrates' objection is very simple. Everyone knows that it is just to pay one's debts, but everyone is also aware that there are occasions when one need not and should not do so. Thus, it is impossible, without contradicting oneself, to say that justice is paying one's debts. One must seek a noncontradictory definition of justice. Cephalus, too, is aware that one must sometimes deviate from the principles of justice in the name of justice, but he has never considered what the consequences of that fact are. He must adhere to the laws, human and divine, or he would have to spend his time in finding out what justice is rather than in doing it. If everyone had to decide whether the laws properly apply in each case that arises, the political result would be anarchy; and, individually, a task beyond the capacities and energies of most men would be imposed on them. For Cephalus the just is identical to the law of the city, and the law is protected by the gods. The problem of justice is simply expressed in his view: if there are no gods, there is no reason to be just or to worry; if there are, we must simply obey their laws, for that is what they wish. But common sense tells us that laws are not always conducive to the good of those they are intended to benefit. Cephalus, however, is content to forget this fact in his sacrifices, even though his actions may be harming others. His lighthearted piety can seem extreme selfishness. He leaves to his son the consideration of what is truly good for other men, for it would force him to make a distinction between the just and the legal. And he leaves to all thoughtful selfish men the consideration of what the profitable life would be if there are no punishments after death. The unity of things expressed in the identification of the just and the legal under the protection of the gods has been rent asunder by Socrates' simple objection to Cephalus' assertion that a man should pay his debts. Now the members of this group must try to find out what justice is and whether justice is good for the man who practices it.

Although the definitions of justice proposed by Cephalus, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus are all found wanting and must be abandoned, the discussions

concerning them are not simply critical nor is their result only negative. From each something is learned which is of the essence of political life and which is reflected in the final definition and the regime that embodies it.

From Cephalus we learn that for most men justice can mean only law-abidingness, and that rewards and punishments in this life and the next are necessary to insure obedience which does not seem to them desirable in itself. Cephalus' definition fails because it cannot account for those instances in which one is admittedly exempted from obeying the law. He has no grasp of the intention or principle of law. He believes in the sanctity of private property: injustice is taking what belongs to others; justice, respecting what belongs to them. Belonging is defined by the law. But insanity and the intention to injure are sufficient grounds for taking away from a man what is thought to belong to him. Rationality and good will, or to put it otherwise, capacity to use a thing well and attachment to the community and its laws, are apparently conditions of the respect of a man's right to ownership. The simple example of the insane man who demands the return of his weapon, if generalized, leads far from the letter of the law, which men like Cephalus must respect. It becomes Polemarchus' responsibility to explain what standard should be looked to when one deviates from the letter of the law—which is equivalent to stating the purpose for which laws are instituted.

(*331d–336a*) Polemarchus inherits his father's duty of defending the law and hence of defending that property which he is going to inherit. He fails in his attempt to define justice in a way which is consistent with the maintenance of private property, and the *Republic* culminates in the elaboration-of a regime in which the only title to property is virtue and which is hence communistic. Polemarchus' original intention when he interrupted was merely to support his father's contention that one should pay what is owed. He does so by citing the authority of a poet. In his case, however (as opposed to that of Cephalus), poetic authority apparently does not refer to the even greater authority of the gods; he expresses his own view. Socrates can, with greater propriety, call into question the opinions of the young Polemarchus based on the authority of Simonides than the dogmas of the pious old Cephalus based on the authority of the traditions about the gods. But even here Socrates does not criticize the authority; he merely asks Polemarchus to interpret. Socrates makes the ironic assumption that Simonides must be right and that, since he is right, his views must accord with the results of rational argument. Polemarchus is compelled to learn how to argue; this is the first step on the road from unconditional acceptance of the ancestral order to the new regime based on reason in which the authority of the father's opinions and the power of his property play no role. By the end of his discussion with Socrates,

Polemarchus is aware that he cannot get help from Simonides and that he must himself find reasons if he is to be satisfied with his beliefs about justice. Finally he and Socrates join in agreeing that Simonides could not have said what Polemarchus asserted he said, for it is unreasonable and base. Simonides remains respectable, but only because it is assumed that he accepts the authority of Polemarchus and Socrates who are now free of him. Polemarchus is the last participant in the discussion who attempts to use an authority as a sufficient cause for belief. Immediately after him comes Thrasymachus with his own definition of justice.

Polemarchus insists that justice is paying what one owes, but Socrates again poses the same objection that silenced his father. In order to save his definition Polemarchus must alter the sense of owing. Now justice is not giving back to any man what he has deposited but giving good things to friends. In general this would mean following Cephalus' rule, but it accounts for the exceptions: one need not aid a man who intends to do one damage—he must be a friend; and one must look to the good of the other party, as Cephalus did not do. Two great themes emerge: friendship, or community, and the good—infinite themes which it now becomes necessary to understand if one wishes to understand justice. Polemarchus, of course, does not recognize what has happened, for he does not see any problem in knowing what is good for a friend.

Socrates explains Polemarchus' definition of justice—doing good, and no harm, to friends—in terms of the example he used to embarrass Cephalus. A thing is not owed if it works harm to render it. But Socrates changes the thing deposited in this case: it is money, not a weapon. This small change is most revealing, for it broadens the scope of the exceptions and changes their sense. Cephalus would not return the weapon because its owner might hurt him with it; his justification is the selfish one of his own defense; justice must be practiced until it is manifestly harmful to oneself. Money in the hands of a madman is not so manifestly dangerous to another man as is a weapon. If one withholds his money, the justification for so doing is not likely to be that he will harm others but rather that he will harm himself. Now the focus of attention is on what it does to the one who receives rather than to the one who gives, a question to which Cephalus was profoundly indifferent. Cephalus was interested in what justice would profit himself, Polemarchus is interested in its advantage for others. He is really much more of a gentleman than his father. He presents the other side of the problem of justice—the good it does the community, as opposed to the individual. The relation between justice conceived as one's own good and justice conceived as the common good is the abiding concern of the *Republic*; Cephalus and Polemarchus represent the two poles. Also at this point, with the recognition that a man's property in money only extends so far as he can

use that money well—only so far as is good for him—private property becomes radically questionable.

After more prodding by Socrates, Polemarchus is led to complete his definition by asserting that enemies are owed harm. Justice is benefiting friends and harming enemies. This is Polemarchus' and the gentleman's view of justice. As Lessing approvingly put it, "for the ancient Greeks moral greatness consisted in a love of friends that is as constant as the hatred of one's enemies is unchanging." Although Socrates finds this understanding of justice ultimately inadequate, he clearly agrees with Lessing that it is the formula for gentlemanly and heroic nobility and higher than most alternatives. It sounds harsh to our ears, for it is far from the morality of universal love to which we are accustomed, and we must make great efforts if we are to understand its dignity. That dignity consists in unswerving loyalty, loyalty to the first, most obvious attachments a man forms—loyalty to his family and his city. Our admiration for this character is manifest in our horror at the man who is willing to betray family or friends for gain, out of fear, or even in the pursuit of an ideal. Such loyalty seems natural, for it springs up in us with our first appetites and tastes; it is identical with love of our own. It does not have the abstract aspect of the love of a humanity which a man cannot know in its entirety, a love which does not make distinctions among men. It is more powerful because of its exclusiveness; it stays within the limits of possible human concern.

But, although many might be willing to admit that one's duties toward one's own take precedence over those toward mankind at large, it might well be asked why it is necessary to harm enemies, or why there need be enemies at all. The answer is twofold. There are unjust men who would destroy the good things and the good life of one's own family or nation if one did not render them impotent. And, even though there were not men who are natively unjust, there is a scarcity of good things in the world. The good life of one group of men leaves other groups outside who would like, and may even be compelled, to take away the good things of the first group. To have a family or a city that is one's own implies the distinction between insiders and outsiders; and the outsiders are potential enemies. Justice as helping friends and harming enemies is peculiarly a political definition of justice, and its dignity stands or falls with the dignity of political life. Every nation has wars and must defend itself; it can only do so if it has citizens who care for it and are willing to kill the citizens of other nations. If the distinction between friends and enemies, and the inclination to help the former and harm the latter, were obliterated from the heart and mind of man, political life would be impossible. This is the necessary political definition of justice,, and it produces its specific kind of human nobility expressed in the virtue of the citizen. Socrates does not simply reject it as he appears to do. The warriors in his best regime, whom he compares to noble

dogs, share in the most salient characteristic of noble dogs: gentleness toward acquaintances and harshness toward strangers. This is the key to the strengths and weaknesses of the political man.

Socrates' analysis of the definition is divided into three parts: (1) a discussion of how one can do good to friends (332c–334b); (2) an attempt to define a friend (334c–335b); and (3) a critique of the notion that a just man can do harm (335b–336a).

Socrates begins by asserting that Simonides meant that the owed is the fitting. The deposit is no longer important. Whether a man has deposited something or not is irrelevant; the only consideration is what is fitting for him. Justice might mean depriving him of what he thinks belongs to him or giving him something to which he appears to have no claim. In this reformulation, doing good to friends and harm to enemies is equivalent to giving to each what is fitting. Polemarchus meant that one gives to friends the things they want and denies to enemies the things they want. Socrates changes Polemarchus' meaning by concentrating not on the wants of men but on what is objectively proper for them. A sick friend is justly treated when given medicine whether he likes it or not. This shift in emphasis implies that the primary concern of the just man must be something Polemarchus has never considered: what counts is not so much the disposition to give the good things to friends, but knowing what those good things are. Justice must be some kind of knowledge.

Therefore Socrates turns to the most evident, perhaps the only sure, models of knowledge of what is fitting—the arts. A doctor wishes to give what is fitting to bodies and knows what is fitting and how to give it. The just man, if he is to succeed in his intention, must also possess an art. Now the problem becomes to identify the art of justice which, to put it mildly, common sense does not apprehend so quickly as it does the other arts. Formally, it must be the art which gives good to friends and harm to enemies, just as cookery gives seasoning to foods.

However, it immediately comes to light that justice is not the only art capable of benefiting friends and harming enemies. Medicine and navigation are of even greater use than justice to men who are sick or sailing. As a matter of fact, each of the arts aims at some good, and hence each is capable of working the benefactions or injuries called for by the definition of justice. The question is to find what justice does that no other art does, and this is obviously a difficult, or, rather, an impossible, task. Polemarchus suggests that justice is most useful and indispensable in the affairs of war, and, in peacetime, in keeping money deposits. This response is more helpful for learning about Polemarchus' view of justice than for solving the problem of justice's subject matter. The connection of war and money is obvious; and the kind of good things Polemarchus means and the sense in which the just citizen is a warrior emerge more clearly. But, as he does in the other cases, Socrates

could easily show that a skilled soldier is a better partner in war than a just man, and a trained banker a better partner in peacetime than a just man. Socrates has indicated by the examples he uses that, for Polemarchus at least, justice is concerned with the acquisition and distribution of good things in communities of men while keeping off the outsiders (332c–d, 333a, 333b). The extraordinary result of this conversation is that justice is useless in the enterprise of doing good to friends and harm to enemies. What has happened is that Socrates and Polemarchus discover that the world is divided up among the arts and there is nothing left for an art of justice. A doctor may do good to his friends and hence be just, but justice is nothing beyond the exercise of his art, which is something other than justice. Arts are the means of doing good and harm; arts have subject matters but justice does not; hence justice is not an art and cannot do good. Justice has disappeared.

Moreover, Socrates insists on pointing out that the arts are neutral, that they can effect opposite results with equal ease. This fact is particularly shocking to Polemarchus, for its consequence is that the practitioner of the art of justice would be as adept at stealing as at guarding a thing and would lie as well as he tells the truth. Nothing in the art would guide a man as to which he should do; he would merely be technically proficient. Instead of being the model of reliability, the just man becomes the archetype of untrustworthiness, the possessor of power without guiding principle. He is a thief and a liar, the contrary of the debt-paying, truth-telling just man defined by Polemarchus' father—a definition which Polemarchus has inherited and the substance of which he is trying to defend.

Of course, it has been admitted that the just man sometimes would not pay his debts and would lie even to his friends, so the result of this argument should not be surprising. But Polemarchus is unwilling to accept it. He is a gentleman, and there are certain things—dishonorable things—a gentleman is never supposed to do. He may admit that they must be done, and even do them, but he refuses to recognize the consequences of what he does. If he did so, it would seem to end in the loss of all standards. Life is ordered according to fixed rules, and the exceptions are hidden in silence. Polemarchus could be accused of hypocrisy, and the limitations of his kind of moralism are exposed here. Socrates hints that the good things which Polemarchus defends might well have been acquired in less than decent ways, the memory of which is lost in the mists of time. But, even worse, his character is such that he would probably rather work harm than use ungentlemanly means to a good end. Socrates, as the *Republic* reveals, is not averse to lies and is certainly no respecter of private property.

However that may be, the assumption that justice is an art does lead to serious difficulties, expressed ironically in the notion that the just man is both useless and a thief. It would seem that arts require particular subject matters and that they are

morally neutral. We are forced to abandon the assumption, and one might very well ask why it was made in the first place. We all sense that justice is a disposition, as Cephalus originally suggested, one which every man must possess in addition to his skill. A doctor must be disposed to heal his patients as well as be able to do so; otherwise he might just as well kill them for profit as cure them. Just why did Socrates turn the conversation in this direction?

In the first place, it must be remembered that, with the banishment of Cephalus, ancestral authority was replaced by what men can know for themselves, by the evidence of reasoned experience. The arts are the most obvious sources of knowledge available to all men as men without the need of any act of faith or the instruction of a particular tradition. The desire to know what one owes other men would most immediately lead in the direction of trying to discern an art which can guide us just as medicine guides us in matters of health. Moreover, however much habit may play a role in the character we call just, it is also clear that it is simply insufficient for a man to follow rules without any knowledge of the reasons behind them. Cephalus is proof enough of that. Our doctors are supposed to obey the Hippocratic oath, and that obedience would, in a sense, make them reliable. But, ultimately, the most important thing is the knowledge of the goodness of that oath, of the reasons why following it is salutary. The worthwhileness of a doctor's activity depends on this; and, no matter how technically proficient he may be, his talents are useless or dangerous if there is no knowledge about this first question. Justice necessarily and primarily demands a knowledge of what is good for man and the community; otherwise the knowledge and skills of the arts are in the service of authoritative myths.

Now, this discussion with Polemarchus outlines in a negative way what the character of the requisite knowledge must be. It cannot be like any of those arts which are always present in every community–shoemaking, weaving, carpentry, etc. This is what Socrates meant in the *Apology* when he told of his quest for wise men. Poets and statesmen, he found, knew literally nothing, whereas artisans did indeed know something. Unfortunately their knowledge was limited and partial, and Socrates said that he would prefer to be ignorant as he was than knowledgeable as they were. For they were content with their competence and closed to the larger questions. To be ignorant in Socrates' way is to be open to the whole. The artisans are models of knowledge, but their kind of knowledge is not applicable to the domain of poets and statesmen. The problem is to combine the concerns of poets and statesmen with knowledge as artisans possess it. Such knowledge is what Socrates is seeking.

The discussion with Polemarchus leads to the same result as the questioning of the artisans described in the *Apology*. The artisans are found insufficient, and the

insufficiency of the arguments here shows why. These arguments are based on the premise that the arts like medicine are self-sufficient; but this is not so. The doctor can produce health, but that health is good he does not learn from medicine, and similarly with all of the arts. They deal with partial goods which presuppose a knowledge of the whole good to which they minister. The error of the discussion was to look for a specific subject matter for justice, to make it one among many arts, to act as though only the doctor had anything to say about medicine. To help a sick friend one needs not only a doctor but someone who knows to whom health is fitting and how many other goods should be sacrificed to it, and who can direct the doctor to do what will most help the patient. There are master arts which rule whole groups of ministerial arts and are necessary to them. These are what Aristotle calls architectonic arts. The carpenter, the mason, the roofer, etc.—all are in need of an architect if a house is to be produced. He is more important than they are, he guides them, and he does not need to be a carpenter, a mason, or a roofer himself. Without the architect, all the other arts connected with building lack an end and are useless or worse. Similarly, justice must be a master art, ruling the arts which produce partial goods so as to serve the whole good. In other words, justice must be knowledge of that good which none of the other arts knows but which each presupposes. Lawgivers actually organize all the arts and tell their practitioners what they can and cannot do. What Socrates proposes is a legislative or political science. If each of the artisans obeys the law established by a legislator who is wise in this science, he would be just, and justice would take care of itself in law-abiding practice of the arts. In this way the arts would provide what is fitting to each man.

The very inadequacy of this argument, which divides the world among the arts without reflecting on that world which is divided, points to an art which does so; that art must be justice. Hence Socrates teaches that in order to be just in the full sense one must be a philosopher, and that philosophy is necessary to justice. Philosophy does have a subject matter which helps in doing good to friends and harm to enemies, for it alone knows what is good or fitting. And it alone is not neutral, for, by its very definition, it seeks the whole good. Justice in this way would be knowledge, would be useful, and would not be able indifferently to produce opposite results. This is the solution which the argument compels us to seek. And a community of artisans ruled by philosophers would be one in which good would be done to friends. This solution, however, must wait until later, for Polemarchus really has no notion of what philosophy is, and its discovery is impossible on this level of thought. The poets and the laws tell Polemarchus the proper place of each thing, and this is why he sees no difficulty in doing good to friends. His is a prephilosophic world, and its authorities must be completely discredited before philosophy can even be sought.

After thoroughly confusing Polemarchus about the way to do good to friends and harm to enemies, Socrates turns to the question of what a friend is. He and Polemarchus agree that men consider as friends those they believe to be good. The problem is whether they must really be good men or only seem to be so in order to be friends. Polemarchus answers sensibly that the reality is not so important but rather what is thought about it. Almost all men have friends, and many are not able to judge the true character of those they call friends. Friendship would be very rare if both parties had to be good men and know it. But from this simple admission follows a consequence which is intolerable to Polemarchus: to the extent that the just man erred about the goodness of men, he would benefit bad men and harm good ones and hence be unjust. A simple reformulation solves the problem: friends are properly those who appear to be good and are.

But this little change, if it were taken seriously, would have the profoundest of effects on Polemarchus' life. His first admission that his friends were those who seemed to him good reflected the way he really thinks. It is an easygoing outlook, typical of most men. He knows who friends are. Our friends are those around us, and the insistence that they must be good is a secondary consideration, one that has an abstract ring to it. This condition is admitted in speech but has little effect in deed. And this means that men who loyally serve their friends are constantly and thoughtlessly doing injustice. This consequence cannot be avoided simply by making more effort, for Polemarchus' view is not merely a result of his laziness but a product of his attachment to family and city. He makes the primitive identification of the good with his own. He is like his father who wanted Socrates as a friend and invited him to become a member of the family. Men who are outsiders can become friends only by becoming "naturalized" members of the family; blood ties are what count. Even the loyalty to the city is understood as an extension of the family. This tendency to see the good in one's own and to devote oneself to it is one of the most powerful urges of human nature and the source of great devotion and energy. Once the distinction between what is good and one's own is made, the principle of loyalty to family and city is undermined. In order to be just, one must seek good men wherever they may be, even in nations fighting one's own nation. If the good must be pursued, then caring for one's own must be extinguished, or it will make one unjust and impede the quest for the good. This undermines family and city; and they must attempt to prevent the distinction from even coming to light. Certainly, Polemarchus would regard the abandonment of his primary loyalties as the destruction of the purpose and dignity of his life. If, however, he is to be consistent with the argument, he must make this sacrifice. A man who wishes to be just must be cosmopolitan.

Thus far, Socrates has led us to the observation that in order to do good to friends and harm to enemies one need only be a philosopher and give up one's attachments to those whom most men call friends. Now he attacks the entire view implied by the definition. He asserts that no just man would harm anyone, thereby opposing his own understanding of justice to that of the gentleman. His is an utterly unpolitical view, one that seems to deny the distinction between friend and enemy. It takes no account of the desire to avenge insults and appears to be predicated on the notion that life is not essentially competitive. Socrates does not suggest that the just man would want to benefit all men, only that he would want to benefit his friends and remain indifferent to the others. Polemarchus believes that it is impossible to benefit friends without harming enemies, for every city is in competition with other cities for the possession of scarce things. There cannot be cities without enemies, and a man cannot be a good citizen without wishing ill to his city's enemies. One can be indifferent to enemies if one divorces oneself from the city's perspective *and* if the things one considers good are not threatened or scarce. Only the things of the mind are such as to belong to all men without necessary exclusion of some men and the war consequent on that exclusion. Nobody need take a man's knowledge from him in order to enjoy it as one would have to do in order to make use of his money. Socrates' view is that of philosophy, in which knowledge is the highest good; Polemarchus' view is that of the city, in which property is the highest, at least the most needful, good.

In the concluding portion of their discussion, Socrates and Polemarchus actually have entirely different understandings of what it means to harm someone. Socrates says that to harm is to make a person or thing worse, with respect to his or its specific virtue. Justice, he asserts without proof, is human virtue, so to harm someone would be to make him more unjust. Correcting his earlier statement that the arts are simply neutral, Socrates further asserts that the practitioners of arts are dedicated to goals which they cannot, to the extent they are true to their arts, ignore. Therefore the just man cannot by justice make another man more unjust, and thus cannot harm him. Now Polemarchus had no such notion in mind when he spoke of harming enemies. What he meant was taking the enemy's property or life, for those are the good things. Socrates' view is perfectly consistent with stealing from or killing an enemy just so long as he is not made more unjust. Socrates and Polemarchus differ about what is truly good. With all of Polemarchus' admiration for justice, it is not the highest thing, not sought for as such. Justice is more of a means to the end of preserving life and property than itself the end of a good life.

Polemarchus' definition of justice might be regarded as the rule requisite to the satisfaction of collective selfishness: be loyal to the members of your own group so that you can best take advantage of the outsiders. And, in principle, there is no

reason why this selfishness should not be extended to the individual if justice is not good in itself. This is why Socrates is able to claim that this definition, which seems so gentlemanly, is the product of a rich tyrant: if wealth is the goal, then the best way to attain it is by breaking all faith and seizing power in one's city and conquering as many nations as one can. Only if justice is an end, not a means, is it reasonable to be unremittingly just.

There is a tension in Polemarchus—of which he is unaware—between his love of property and his love of justice. This is what Socrates exposes and what Thrasymachus is about to exploit. Justice, Thrasymachus says, is the morality of a band of robbers who are face to face with their victims, and only a simpleton would be duped into making something more of it. Polemarchus is in an untenable position somewhere between utter selfishness and total dedication to the common good. Gentlemanly morality is self-contradictory, and the goods desired by the gentlemen would, if he were clear-sighted, lead in the direction of tyranny. Thrasymachus continues on the road to it, a road to which Socrates' questions have directed him.

(*336b–354b*) Thrasymachus bursts violently into the discussion. He is angry because Socrates and Polemarchus had been engaged in a dialogue. He sees this as a form of weakness. The participants in a dialogue obey certain rules which, like laws, govern their association; they seek a common agreement instead of trying to win a victory. The very art of dialectic seems to impose a kind of justice on those who practice it, whereas rhetoric, the art of making long speeches without being questioned—Thrasymachus' art—is adapted to self-aggrandizement. Thrasymachus sees dialectic as an opponent of rhetoric and wishes to show his audience the superiority of rhetoric. Moreover, Thrasymachus objects to the substance as well as the form of what he has just heard. Justice as doing good to others fits in well with the self-abnegation of dialectic and is just as unsound. It is foolishness, the direct opposite of prudence, which causes a man to hold the position that justice is doing good to others while also supposing that it is good for the doer. Thrasymachus adopts the accents of moral indignation in the cause of immorality. He charges Socrates with wrongdoing, with deceiving other men; since Socrates' method is irony, he is a dissembler or a hypocrite. He imposes a higher good, in which he himself does not believe, and would cause men and cities to neglect their needs and interests.

Thrasymachus wishes to punish Socrates, and, in a book teeming with allusions to Socrates' accusation and trial, Thrasymachus makes the most explicit condemnation of Socrates; his insistence that Socrates, if bested by Thrasymachus, propose an appropriate punishment for himself prefigures that fateful day when the

condemned Socrates is forced by the Athenian law to propose his own penalty. To Thrasymachus, as he will to the Athenian jurors, Socrates claims that he has no money; and now, as they will then, his friends offer to provide him with the necessary funds. Thrasymachus and the city are both angry at Socrates for not accepting their point of view, which appears to be as clear as day. The terms of the two accusations seem to be different, but it soon becomes evident that Thrasymachus' definition of justice is really the same as the city's and that he acts as its representative. For, as soon as he asserts that the just is the advantage of the stronger, he explains that by the "stronger" he means those who hold power in a city and constitute its sovereign, whether that sovereign consists of the people, the rich, the well-born, or a single man. The just is whatever the sovereign in its laws says is just. This is precisely what the city says, and Socrates is disloyal to both city and Thrasymachus in suggesting that justice goes beyond the law-that law may not even be necessary if wise men rule. This is a notion that is not only antilegal, but is, in particular, antidemocratic, because it looks to the few wise rather than the many free. Thrasymachus insists that the decree of the sovereign is ultimate, and that there is no recourse beyond it, while Socrates insists that laws are just only to the extent they conform to a standard of justice superior to the laws and independent of the wishes of the sovereign.

Thrasymachus' identification with the city's view of justice helps to explain his previously mentioned moral indignation in the cause of immorality, which also has its counterpart in the actions of the city. The city insists that its laws are just and punishes those who break them. Anger seems a proper reaction to lawbreakers who are thought to harm others for their selfish ends. But Thrasymachus has stripped away the veils that covered the selfishness of the rulers and their laws. Those laws themselves serve the private interest of a part of the city and do harm to the rest of it. Laws are not directed to the common good. And yet the city will continue to put lawbreakers to death as unjust men and enemies of the common good. The anger awakened in men by the sight of indifference or hostility to law is a powerful force in protecting the law and hence the city, but it can also be the enemy of justice and is certainly the greatest enemy of philosophy. Thrasymachus, whose art gives speech to the passions of the city, is its agent in condemning Socrates, and his action in the service of this passion imitates the city's action.

The immediate cause of Thrasymachus' ire is the end of Socrates' argument with Polemarchus. Based on the tacit premise that justice is good, the argument led to the conclusion that justice is an art that does good to those to whom it ministers. The just man profits both others and himself. This means that there is a common good; the community is bound together by justice, and no one sacrifices his own personal advantage to it. On the contrary, if—to use Socrates' hyperbolic

expression—justice is human virtue, each gains his fulfillment in the prosperity of the whole. A just man never harms anyone. Thrasymachus, referring to his knowledge of the world and the actual practice of the cities, treats this view as the result of a culpable innocence, an innocence destructive to the happiness of those who are taken in by it. Practically speaking, as Cephalus' example shows, justice is law-abidingness. That is certainly what the city says it is; and, even if there is a natural justice, it must be embodied in a code of political law in order to have a real effect. The city always presents its laws as a constitutive part of itself, like the territory and the populace. But, in fact, those laws can vary as the territory and the populace cannot; they are a function of the regime, of the kind of men who govern the city. When the poor, or the rich, or the old families, or a tyrant take over the rule in a city, its laws change correspondingly. The sovereign makes the laws, and those laws always happen to reflect its interests. Oligarchies make laws which favor and protect oligarchy; democracy makes laws which favor and protect democracy, etc. The regime is the absolute beginning point; there is nothing beyond it. To understand the kind of justice practiced in any city one must look to the regime. The laws have their source in the human, all too human. He who obeys them, in reverence or in fear, is simply serving the advantage of the stronger, whether the stronger is a single man, or the great majority of the people, or any other politically relevant group within the city. If this be the case, however, prudence and self-interest would seem to dictate to the individual that either he should try to evade the law or else become the lawmaker himself. Thrasymachus' thesis is simply that the regime makes the laws and that the members of the regime look to their own good and not the common good. The city is not a unity but a composite of opposed parties, and the party which wins out over the others is the source of the law. There is no fundamental difference between tyranny and other regimes because they all have the same selfish end. Justice, therefore, is not a fundamental phenomenon; the lawgiver cannot base himself upon it, for justice is a result of law.

Socrates does not deny that it is the stronger who rule and establish the law. He silently accepts the view that all existing regimes are as Thrasymachus says they are. The two men thus agree that the character of the ruling group is the core of politics, that the rulers are the stronger, and that justice is a political phenomenon and must be embodied in the laws of a city. The issue between them is whether all rulers, all lawgivers, must be selfish in the way Thrasymachus insists they are. From this point on the question is the regime—who rules; and Socrates tries to find a kind of man, a political class, which is both strong and public-spirited.

Socrates turns, then, to the criticism of Thrasymachus' view of the rulers. He quickly succeeds in embarrassing him by the reflection that sometimes rulers make mistakes; hence obedience to the law may be as much to their disadvantage as their

advantage. Justice is not the advantage of the stronger unless the stronger (the rulers) know what their own advantage is. The emphasis now shifts from strength to knowledge. Socrates' question appears to refer to rulers' mistakes about the means to their ends, but could apply to mistakes about the proper ends of action. Socrates, then, is also asking whether the rulers really know what is advantageous and leads Thrasymachus into a region of profound problems on which he has hardly reflected. Like Polemarchus, he takes it for granted that the most common objects of desire—particularly whatever has to do wealth—are advantageous and that knowledge of them is a given. Thrasymachus is the more thoughtful voice of the most thoughtless opinions and desires. He teaches an art by means of which men can get those good things, and a mistaken ruler for him would be one who did not know the appropriate means to the given ends. He wishes to educate a clever, selfish man who knows how to get what he wants. But, as Socrates will show, this artisan of selfish satisfaction is really not in harmony with the vulgar tastes Thrasymachus is also committed to supporting. It is by developing this contradiction that Socrates will be able to tame the wild beast.

Thrasymachus could easily have circumvented the difficulty which Socrates presents. The crude Clitophon, who enters to defend Thrasymachus, shows Polemarchus (who is now Socrates' ally and defender) how obvious this route is. Thrasymachus had only to say, as Clitophon insists he meant, that justice is what *appears* to be the advantage of the stronger. This position is close to that of legal positivism: the just is what the city says is just and nothing more. Clitophon asserts the laws established by the rulers are based on their *apparent* advantage. This position may not be true but it does not defy common sense, and it seems based on the actual practice of cities. The thesis merely asserts that the only source and sanction of law is the sovereign and that it is hence benighted to look for higher justification. There is no need to define rulers by any criterion other than their having the power to make laws in the city, and the question of what is truly advantageous is set aside. Clitophon's solution to Socrates' difficulty does not contain those internal contradictions which bring about Thrasymachus' downfall.

Thrasymachus, however, chooses to respond to Socrates' objection by arguing that the ruler is always right and knows his own advantage. The ruler who makes mistakes is not a ruler; that is, almost all rulers are not really rulers. It is not that rulers *do* behave with scientific selfishness but that they *should*. Thrasymachus, as it were, anticipates Socrates' best regime by developing an alternative opposed to it. As in Socrates' good city, where rulers will be trained who are perfectly public-spirited, so in Thrasymachus' there will be rulers who are perfectly selfish; the rulers in both regimes do have in common, however, the fact that they are knowers. Thrasymachus' regime is as improbable and opposed to experience as is Socrates'.

Rather than defend the plausible observation that rulers of selfish intention are the source of law, Thrasymachus encumbers himself with the responsibility for what amounts to a moral imperative, requiring rulers to be selfish with perfect knowledge.

Why does Thrasymachus do so? In the first place, he has simply thought through the consequences of his position, unlike the advocates of a crude positivism. If law has no deeper authority than human convention, any man who reflects at all on what kind of life he should live realizes he cannot rely on the law for guidance. Every man reasonably pursues his own good, and, if there is no common good, he will properly use the law for his own private satisfaction. This is the lesson which the individual can well draw from the teaching that law is nothing more than the sovereign's will; and the intelligent tyrant seems to be the one who has best learned the lesson. The ruler is hence a man who seeks his own advantage; to do so is almost the only alternative, since other goals are illusory. If he fails to attain it, he is a failure as a ruler and a man. Thrasymachus looks at politics from the point of view of the man who wants to live well and has understood the nature of justice; it is this perspective which causes him to go beyond Clitophon's formulation.

Further, to the extent that in this drama Thrasymachus plays the role of the city, he echoes the city's insistence that it knows the truth. For the city could hardly admit that its laws are essentially fallible. Its pronouncements must be authoritative, and all knowledge, divine or human, must be ratified and codified by the sovereign. It has a monopoly of wisdom. Otherwise every individual would have an appeal from it.

And, finally, Thrasymachus as the practitioner and teacher of an art, one which he believes to be the most important art for men who want to live a good life, must make a claim himself to possess knowledge and to be able to convey that knowledge to others. As Socrates suggests, he is in Athens looking for students, whose money he needs in order to live. He directs his appeal to noble, political youths of high ambition. They wish to be rulers. But if there is no art the possession of which makes a man a ruler and enables him to attain the good sought for in the activity of ruling, what would Thrasymachus have to teach them? Clitophon's argument implies that the ruler is defined only by holding office, not by any particular skill which gives him the capacity to attain his end. This would be disastrous for Thrasymachus' profession. He therefore claims he teaches a skill which can make men rulers, in the sense that they will be able to fulfill their wishes. The ordinary ruler is potentially the completely successful selfish ruler. He cannot be understood without reference to this end any more than the doctor can be understood without reference to the end of curing sick men. A ruler who errs about his advantage is not

as such a ruler any more than a mathematician who errs in calculation is as such a mathematician. Thrasymachus promises political success to his students. His definition of the rulers "in the precise sense" is part of his professional propaganda.

In the discussion of this definition of the ruler who is a perfect knower of an art, we see that Thrasymachus is not merely a lover of gain. He is also, in his way, a lover of knowledge. He is a model of that not uncommon phenomenon, "the intellectual." His passions are in the service of things other than knowledge although he devotes himself to a life of knowledge. Knowledge is not pursued for the sake of knowledge, but he recognizes a certain superiority in the life devoted to knowing for its own sake. It is this contradiction that defeats him, for taking knowledge seriously leads beyond preoccupation with one's private advantage toward a disinterested life devoted to universal concern. Thrasymachus' respect for art and reason enables Socrates to tame him, both because Thrasymachus is compelled by the argument as a less rational man would not be when an argument goes counter to his passions, and because he is intrigued by Socrates' art and skill. Even though his arguments are not always simply good, Socrates manages to get the advantage over the great rhetorician. This is an impressive feat. The city, when confronted with Socrates, itself destroys him; Thrasymachus, charmed by his arguments, finally becomes his friend. The intellectual voice of the city can become tractable as the city never will. The *Republic*, a book about a perfect city, is characterized by having perfect interlocutors, that is, men without whom a city could not be founded and who are, at the same time, persuadable, whom argument can convince to adapt to a new kind of world which is contrary to their apparent advantage. Just as one must have almost unbelievable conditions to found the best city in deed, so one must have exceptional interlocutors to found it in speech.

After Thrasymachus posits the precise definition of the ruler, a definition which assumes that ruling is an art and that art is a great good, it is a simple matter for Socrates to refute—or rather to silence—him. This argument is of particular interest because it poses the problem of justice in a most radical form. Socrates proceeds to show that all arts are directed to subject matters and that they are concerned with those subject matters and not with themselves; all arts rule something, and they are interested in the good of the thing ruled. The practitioner of an art, at least in the precise sense, does not serve himself; on the contrary, he forgets himself completely. Thrasymachus' definition leads to the furthest extreme from his intention. If one wanted to have a city of men who cared only for the public rather than the private, one would only have to find a way of constituting one peopled by artisans in the precise sense—which is just the solution of the *Republic*. To the extent to which a man is devoted to his calling, he forgets his own advantage.

Thrasymachus rebels at the conclusion to which the argument compels him; in attempting to refute it, he cites the way of the world. Shepherds care for their sheep in order that they may be eaten, not in order to have happy sheep. Rulers look on the people as shepherds do sheep: as objects of exploitation. A shepherd who looked to the good of the sheep would not help them but would only serve the appetites of his master. Similarly, the man who cares for the people and devotes himself to the common good only makes the people fatter for the exploitation of the city's masters. It is much more reasonable for the shepherd to deceive his masters and eat the sheep himself or to make himself the master. Now Thrasymachus makes it explicit that justice is bad for a man and that the best way of life is the most unjust one—the tyrant's life. His indignation at Socrates' argument is understandable, since one must wonder who or what takes care of the artisan-ruler who is also a human being and has needs and wishes of his own. Why would he be willing to be a ruler? Thrasymachus is unable to find an answer to this question because his own assertions have bound him.

It is Socrates himself who provides an answer, although it is an enigmatic and ironic one. Reiterating this principle that a shepherd—or a ruler—by definition cares for nothing but his flock, Socrates adds that, since the artisan gets nothing for himself from his art, he must be paid a wage. A man who earns a wage is, according to Socrates, a practitioner of the wage-earner's art; in point of fact, every artisan practices two arts-the one from which he gets his title and the wage-earner's art. With the latter art he cares for himself; with the former, for others. Wage earning, then, is the rubric that covers the side of a man's life concerned with his personal advantage; he must provide himself with the necessities, and he pursues his own good as well as that of others; he is not a selfless servant.

Thus a new art, and a new kind of art, comes to light. This art, however, contradicts the definition of the arts which has been the basis of the discussion. The wage-earner's art is not concerned with the good of the art's object, but rather with the good of the practitioner. After all, the wage earner does not care for the well-being of money, he cares for his own well-being. Moreover, there being no pre-established harmony between the two arts practiced by a man, there is every probability of there being conflicts between their demands. For example, what is the doctor to do who is offered a bribe for harming his patient? His two arts each make rigorous and contradictory claims upon him, and there is no evident principle for choosing which should be preferred. Socrates makes this explicit when he tells Glaucon that wages must always be paid to political men, and that there is a perpetual conflict between their interests as wage earners and their interests as good rulers. The tension between the public good and private good of the individual which Socrates had explicitly denied is admitted with this introduction of the wage-

earner's art. Thrasymachus, however, is not quick enough to notice this and take advantage of it.

This wage-earner's art is ubiquitous. It accompanies all of the arts and directs their action. It is thus an architectonic art. Contrary to Socrates' argument that each art is complete and perfect in itself, needing nothing beyond itself, a super art is necessary to supplement all the arts. For they must be related to each other and to the whole of which their subject matters are a part. The carpenter's, bricklayer's, and plasterer's arts are not sufficient unto themselves; they must be guided by the architect's art. Money, or what we would call the economic system, is a sort of architectonic principle; for in ordinary cities the amount of money paid for the products of the arts determines what arts are practiced, how they are practiced, and what kind of men practice them. Money is the common denominator running through all the arts; it seems to establish their value and provides the motivation for practicing them. Thrasymachus, who is seeking students in Athens, is surely a part of this system. His rhetoric is of use to him only if people desire it and are willing to pay for learning it.

Socrates, by means of this fabrication of an art of wage earning, points, as he did in the discussion with Polemarchus, to the need for a master art to supplement the other arts. Money is manifestly an inadequate architectonic or regal principle, and its inadequacies serve to indicate what a true architectonic art would have to be and accomplish. Money cannot discern the nature of each of the arts nor evaluate the contribution their products make to happiness; the price paid for the services of the arts is merely the reflection of the untutored tastes of the many or the rich. Money constitutes an artificial system which subordinates the higher to the lower. And the man who serves for money becomes the slave of the most authoritative voices of his own time and place, while renouncing the attempt to know, and live according to, the natural hierarchy of value. He is always torn between the demands of his art and the needs of the marketplace.

The wage-earner's art is a kind of political substitute for philosophy. The intention of philosophy is to understand the nature of the arts and order them toward the production of human happiness, and to educate men to desire those things which most conduce to happiness. It can claim to rule all the arts for it alone tries to know the whole, the true whole, as opposed to the view of the whole of this time or place, and it restores the unity to a man's life. It demands total dedication to its objects, as was required of the arts, while giving ample reward to its practitioner in that it is the perfection of his nature and his greatest satisfaction. Only in philosophy is there an identity of the concern for the proper practice of the art and that for one's own advantage. Socrates embodies a solution to the conflicting demands which render Thrasymachus' life meaningless: Socrates combines in a

single way of life the satisfactions of the lover of knowledge and the lover of gain. All other lives are essentially self-contradictory. In the philosopher we can find both the public-spirited ruler and the satisfied man.

Thus Socrates, whose explicit intention was to show that the practitioners of arts-and hence Thrasymachus' rulers-cannot be concerned with their own advantage, has, by the introduction of the wage-earner's art, tacitly admitted the necessity and legitimacy of that concern. He has only shown that men cannot consistently at the same time be both rulers in the precise sense defined by Thrasymachus and seekers of their own advantage, while hinting that philosophy is the only resolution of the conflict between art or science and self-interest. As it appears to Thrasymachus, Socrates is madly insisting that a man spend his life in total dedication to others without any reason for so doing and in blind indifference to the facts of life. Thrasymachus cannot defend his position because of his earlier assertions, and he is prevented by them from making his powerful appeal to men's lust and their respect for knowledge. His definition of justice as the advantage of the stronger fails, but only because his definition of the ruler is indefensible. He sees this as a result of having become entangled in Socrates' dishonest arguments. And no reader can be satisfied that Thrasymachus' definition has been refuted or that this discussion has proved that there is sufficient reason to devote oneself to the common good. The discussion has only served to heighten the sense of the disproportion between the private and the public good, to make justice more problematic than ever.

Instead of abandoning or attempting to improve Thrasymachus' definition of justice, the conversation curiously changes its theme. Without having established what justice is, Socrates turns to the question of whether it is good or not. It is most unusual to attempt to determine the desirability of a thing whose character one does not know. Socrates' reason for this procedure is that this is what interests the other men present whose attention he is trying to attract and who believe they have a fair sense of what justice is. They are not particularly interested in a philosophic investigation of the nature of justice, but in how they will live profitably or well. Thrasymachus has told them that they will do so by becoming tyrants, by disregarding the laws. Socrates appears to disagree. They want to know whether Thrasymachus' ruler lives a good life. Thrasymachus has stated that it is bad to be just, in the sense of caring for others, or obeying the law, or being dedicated to the common good. Socrates until now, along with Cephalus and Polemarchus, has seemed to believe that one must be just, that the only problem is to define more precisely what justice is. Now, following Thrasymachus, he makes the whole discussion much more radical in permitting the goodness of justice and the just life to become doubtful. Although justice has not been defined, an example of it has

been present in the discussion and the members of the group look to that. That example is the deposit. Cephalus says that, though it may be a desirable object, one must return it for fear of divine punishment for not doing so. Polemarchus says that one must not, in deciding whether to return it, consider whether it is desirable for oneself or not, in the case of a friend, but only whether it will do the friend good. Thrasymachus says, that since the gods do not punish and there is no common good, one should keep deposits and try to get as much more as possible, the only consideration being one's own advantage. Glaucon and Adeimantus who are about to enter the discussion understand quite well what Thrasymachus is telling them; and Socrates *seems* to be saying that it is bad to keep deposits and break faith. This is what draws their attention, and Socrates makes them anxious to know why he thinks it is bad to become a tyrant. The question of the goodness of justice, the nature of which they think they know, will be the spur to their quest for the discovery of its true nature.

To refute Thrasymachus' contention that it is disadvantageous to be just, Socrates makes three arguments.

First, he establishes that Thrasymachus holds the unconventional position that injustice is a virtue, meaning by injustice getting the better of, or more than, others. Life, in his view, is a competition, and he who is most talented at the struggle possesses the greatest virtue. At the end of a complicated, specious, and amusing chain of reasoning, Socrates makes injustice appear to be a vice because it is contrary to wisdom, which is a virtue. The wise man, understood again by Socrates as the possessor of an art, does not seek to win out over other possessors of the same art. As a matter of fact they are, as such, in fundamental harmony, accepting the same general rules, at one, the same as each other. Mathematicians are all seeking the same result to the same problem, and, as mathematicians, there is no competition among them. The just man is more like the wise man in this than is the unjust man. Hence justice is virtue and injustice vice.

Now this would only be convincing if justice were wisdom and if, therefore, the objects of human action could be gained without taking them away from others. This is by no means evident. The result of the argument serves to point toward a realm of noble human activity which is not essentially competitive, and to show that the desire to have more for oneself is a goal which contradicts the character of art or science which, like law, deals not with the individual, but rather with the universal. But this argument does not suffice to convince anyone that it is possible to live well without being a sturdy competitor and re-enforces the doubt about the desirability of being devoted to art or wisdom.

Socrates only succeeded in this discussion because of Thrasymachus' incapacity to make the proper distinctions and to see the problem in the analogy to the arts.

Surely, it is impossible to hold that life is simply getting more; but in the character of civil society and the precariousness of human life and property there is a substantial basis for Thrasymachus' observations which he has been unable to defend. Socrates, rather than refuting him, humiliates and punishes him. At the end of this argument he is shown to be unjust but unwise, discredited before an audience in his claim to wisdom, and, worst of all, shown to be an inferior rhetorician. The apparently shameless Thrasymachus, willing to say anything, is revealed in all his vanity, for he blushes. He has no true freedom of mind, because he is attached to prestige, to the applause of the multitude and hence their thought. He gives voice merely to common opinions which are usually kept quiet and therefore appears wiser than most men. But he is really conventional and petty, a lover of applause more than of truth.

The next argument advanced by Socrates in favor of justice is that it is necessary. It begins from a more conventional understanding of justice: obedience to common rules which enable a group to act in common. Socrates proves that the acquisition of any of the goals previously praised by Thrasymachus requires at least some justice. This is undeniably true, but it does not prove that those goals are unattractive; it only shows that justice may be an unpleasant necessity in gaining them—a repulsive means to a desirable end. In this sense, the justice of a city would be no different from that of a band of robbers. Each is forced to make some sacrifices of immediate individual advantage for the sake of long-range self-interest. There is nothing intrinsically more noble about the city. At this point it would almost seem as though Socrates were accusing Thrasymachus of being too "idealistic." The latter thinks the strong man can simply ignore justice, while Socrates teaches that justice must be a matter of concern to him who wants to get more than others; it is an unfortunate fact of life.

The third argument is to the effect that justice is to be desired because it is the health and perfection of the soul. In the course of the first argument, Thrasymachus had somehow agreed with Socrates that justice is virtue. But what is virtue, if not that which allows a thing to perform its work well? Nobody would want to have a sick body or a horse that could not pull its load. It therefore follows that justice, as the virtue of the soul, is desirable in itself. In addition to its other weaknesses, this argument is purely formal and empty. Everyone wishes to have a healthy soul. But what it consists in is the question. Above all, it is not clear that the justice spoken of in this third argument is identical with that spoken of in the second one. Is the man who obeys the laws of the community for the sake of ultimate gain precisely the same man as the one who is perfecting his soul? Are there not two definitions of justice implied here that have no necessary connection, so that the man who fulfills

the commands of the one is not necessarily fulfilling the commands of the other and may even be contradicting them?

Thus ends the inconclusive argument with Thrasymachus, and he is shunted aside. But two important objects have been accomplished by the confrontation. The traditional definitions of justice have been reduced to a shambles, revealing the need for a fresh start. Furthermore, although, as Socrates disarmingly admits, they have not defined justice but have wandered, their wandering has not been purposeless—they have not defined justice, but they have succeeded in defining the problem of justice. Justice is either what makes a city prosper or it is a virtue of the soul and hence necessary to the happiness of the individual. *The* question is whether the two possibilities are identical, whether devotion to the common good leads to the health of the soul or whether the man with a healthy soul is devoted to the common good. It is left to Glaucon and Adeimantus to pose this question which is the distillation of the arguments of Book I.

(*357a–367e*) With Glaucon and Adeimantus, Socrates becomes a teacher. We watch him educating those Athenian youths he was accused of corrupting. The action of the *Republic* now becomes a formal response to the charge made in Aristophanes' *Clouds* which showed Socrates leaving the scene and permitting the unjust speech to overcome the just one. Here he becomes the defender of justice; indeed the whole *Republic* represents the triumph of the just speech. The two youths, brothers of Plato, introduce a new element into the dialogue. (For another account of Socrates' relationship to Glaucon, cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, III, vi.) They are potential Athenian statesmen, men whose goals transcend the horizon of sensuality and money which limited the interlocutors of the first book. They are lovers of honor, which lends nobility to their souls, frees them from the goals which rendered Thrasymachus' notion of advantage so crude and narrow, and gives them the spiritual substance required for the sublimating experience of Socratic education.

They have often heard the arguments of rhetoricians and sophists, all of which, according to Glaucon, propound the thesis of Thrasymachus. This teaching is the application to politics of what has come to be known as pre-Socratic philosophy. The results of the study of nature led the earlier philosophers to believe that there is no cosmic support for justice, that the gods, if they exist at all, have no care for men. Justice is, then, merely human convention and hence a matter of indifference to those who wish to live according to nature. This does not necessarily lead to the consequence that one must desire to become a tyrant, for it is possible to care for things which cannot be procured by political life, for example, philosophy. But, in general, most men do care for the political life or things which can best be procured

by it. Sophists and rhetoricians extract the political significance from the philosophers' knowledge of nature. They teach that the proper study of politics is not the laws or justice, for they are phantasms, but rhetoric, the means of getting one's way. At best, then, the study of nature apparently leads to indifference to the city and its laws; at worst it leads to tyranny. This was the suspicion of the Athenian *demos*, and it may very well be the case. Devotion to justice or the opposite is not simply a question of decency or corruption but one of the truth of things. And if what Thrasymachus teaches is the truth, the city in self-defense must suppress that truth.

It may be recalled that Socrates was accused of being a proponent of this pre-Socratic philosophy so inimical to the city's interest and a teacher of rhetoric. The *Republic* defends Socrates against this accusation: here he is shown to be the protector of justice against a rhetorician. Of course, he does not simply defend the justice of the ancestral laws of the city; his is a philosophic response to a philosophic challenge, and therefore it, too, is subversive of the ancestral. This response cannot merely be an exhortation to the practice of justice; it must also attempt to find a natural support for justice. The study of justice therefore leads to the study of nature; the character of justice depends on the character of nature as a whole. Hence the *Republic*, beginning with justice, must be a comprehensive book. In being forced to defend justice, Socrates is forced to enter forbidden realms and to expound novel conceits. Innocence once lost cannot be regained; the substitute is philosophizing in the fullest sense.

Although Socrates is not depicted as a practitioner of rhetoric, his appeal to Glaucon and Adeimantus stems from a kind of rhetoric which succeeded in silencing the master rhetorician Thrasymachus without truly refuting him. Socrates controlled the discussion from the outset in such a way as to involve them while, and in, posing the problem of justice in its most radical form. The confrontation with Thrasymachus was in a sense carried on for Glaucon's benefit. Socrates' success at perplexing and attracting Glaucon was seen when Glaucon could not restrain himself from interrupting to express his wonder at Socrates' assertion that punishment is a form of wage for rulers. Both Socrates and Thrasymachus, for their various reasons, are interested in these two men—young, teachable, and ambitious. Among the best of the youth, Glaucon and Adeimantus are powerfully drawn to excel in the most honored pursuits, those in which they can most benefit both others and themselves. That is to say they are drawn to politics. And Thrasymachus offers them the means of success, both by the tools of persuasion he can provide and by the liberating insight into the nature of political life on which his teaching is based. In effect, Thrasymachus tells them that in their pursuit of glory they need not be hampered by considerations of justice. This is an attractive teaching, for it

simplifies things and gives them a reasoned ground for giving way to those temptations which political life always presents, temptations which are usually resisted at the command of law and shame. They are ready to become Thrasymachus' students since reason and passion combine to support him. But Socrates proves to be the superior speaker. Somehow what he represents is stronger; he arouses their curiosity by showing that his rhetoric is more powerful and by appealing to their nobility and love of justice. Socrates' paradoxical argument touches something in them. This is the beginning of an education that will lead them very far from anything they have ever known, but the end of which follows inevitably from the concerns with which they began. Before they can turn to Thrasymachus, they will have to overcome Socrates.

The daring and manly Glaucon has seen that Socrates has at best shown only the necessity of justice and not its desirability. More urbane than Thrasymachus, he recognizes the power of the reputation of justice. Therefore he does not himself praise injustice but puts the argument on its behalf in the mouth of others. He presents his motivation as a desire to see justice vindicated. Of course, he does not have to sell a teaching about justice as did Thrasymachus. The contradiction between the public teaching of injustice and the public necessity for the profession of justice was inherent in Thrasymachus' situation, and Glaucon's situation does not involve him in it. He profits from the lesson of Thrasymachus' discomfiture; hiding his personal doubts, he is able nevertheless to satisfy his curiosity about the goodness of justice. His very mode of presenting his discourse is a model of the hypocritical use of public professions of justice.

Glaucon asks whether justice is good by nature or only by law or convention, and is thus the first participant in the dialogue who turns to nature as his standard. He is a daring man whose desire not to be hoodwinked by common opinions about the good gives him a certain intellectual force lacked by Thrasymachus. The latter is perhaps too concerned with, and dependent on, what men usually hold to be good to look for a standard independent of civil society which might divorce him from it. And he also is so convinced of the power of art, and of his art in particular, to accomplish whatever one wants that he does not feel compelled to look for the permanent limits and ends which cannot be altered by art. At all events, it is Glaucon who goes to the roots by elaborating—though in the name of others—a teaching about nature which denies that man's nature is essentially political. Bound by its ancestral laws and myths, the city, like Thrasymachus, does not raise the question of nature; in fact it hinders the question from arising. It wishes to give the accidents of this time and place the same status as the unchanging principles of all things. It presents a certain combination of nature and convention as the horizon within which its citizens must live and act. The cosmic phenomena are interpreted

by the city as expressions of the same divine will which supports its laws; the ways of the heavens and those of city are in its view the same. The first effort of philosophy or science was to sort out the various elements in our experience, to discover the true cause of lightning, eclipses, etc., by means of investigation unhampered by authority. It had to liberate itself from the weight of respectable opinion and to become aware of the existence of rationally comprehensible principles of the phenomena seen in the heavens; in other words, nature had to be discovered against the will of the city. The consequence of this investigation was to deny the naturalness of the city, to deny that the lightning which strikes the man has any relation to justice, to deny that eclipses are signs from the gods. In this perspective, justice is merely human and is only punished if seen by human beings. Glaucon, who assumes this philosophic background in his speech, draws the conclusion that if a man could be invisible to human beings, there would be no reason for him to be just in his pursuit of the good. Recalling to our minds Thrasymachus' shepherd, he tells the story of Gyges, the shepherd, who, with his ring that made him invisible, deposed his master and exploited his master's flocks, animal and human. And, by means of Thrasymachus' rhetoric, men can make their acts change appearance, which is tantamount to making them invisible. One should be indifferent to the city or use it for one's own purposes, but one need never take it seriously for itself. Glaucon challenges Socrates with the problem at its most extreme. He honestly wishes to be convinced that justice is best, but he does not want to be duped. He must know; for above all he seeks what is good for himself and does not care to be taken in by edifying preaching which will cause him to miss the enjoyment of the objects of his desires. Glaucon presents the political supplement to pre-Socratic natural philosophy: the city limits men in the pursuit of the good things, but its only justification for doing so is the need to preserve itself.

According to Glaucon, the character of justice can be discovered in its origin; the nature of a thing, in his view, is to be understood by that from which it comes, by its beginning and not its end. Nature dictates the pursuit of one's own good, but because of the scarcity of good things, this pursuit must be carried on at the expense of others. It is good to take from others what belongs to them, and it is bad to have things taken which belong to oneself; but the badness of the latter exceeds the goodness of the former. For those who cannot succeed at taking without also being taken from, it is better to compromise, giving up the one and gaining immunity from the other. Such a compromise, however, constitutes no more than a human construction, a contract. It does not overcome nature, which still impels a man to get what he wants without considering the contract; it is simply a recognition of the imprudence of doing so. Since the city's justice does not make men good or happy, able men who have the arts of force and deception can, and in

all reason should, continue to follow the dictates of nature. In other words, superior men are not bound by the contract for they do not receive any advantage from it. In this perspective, justice is the simple, unadorned will, following the contract, to avoid injuring other men, whether this means obeying the laws set down to this end or equitably correcting the law so as to fulfill its intention. There is, then, no particular knowledge or ability implied in being just; it is merely the performance of a difficult task that goes against the grain of one's desires. Thrasymachus had said that the laws were made for the advantage of the stronger, meaning by "the stronger" whatever party happens to hold power. Glaucon implicitly accuses him of holding a conventional view of the stronger. There is a naturally strong man, and for him to obey the laws would serve the advantage of the conventionally, or politically, stronger but of the naturally weaker. But, from either standpoint, the law-abiding man is an innocent, and Glaucon adopts Thrasymachus' notion of the just man as the simple, honest server of other men's interest. And it is this understanding of justice that Glaucon asks Socrates to defend. Socrates must show that the man who is whipped, racked, chained, and has his eyes burned out because men believe him to be unjust will be blessedly happy if only he possesses justice; while the prudent, courageous, skilled server of his own interest is miserable because he lacks justice. Socrates is commanded to prove that selfless dedication is rewarded by nature, that justice is the one thing most needful.

After Glaucon completes his exposition of the nature of justice and makes his demands for its defense, his brother enters the scene to state his problem. Although the two speeches seem supplementary, they are really quite different and set conflicting tasks for Socrates. As Glaucon was daring, Adeimantus is moderate; as Glaucon turned to nature, Adeimantus turns to opinion; as Glaucon paid attention to what he saw, Adeimantus pays attention to what he hears. He is particularly addicted to poetry. He does not make an argument for the superiority of injustice, but is perplexed by what he hears about justice. Although justice is praised, it is not praised for itself but for its rewards, and those rewards consist in certain pleasures which can be enjoyed by men who are unjust. It is not justice but the reputation for justice which gets these rewards. The accounts of gods and men contained in the classic poems support this conclusion. According to these poems, some just men are unhappy, and unjust men can win the favor of the gods. Everything that is known about men's duties comes from the poetic tradition, the laws, and parental training; and all in effect agree that justice itself does not produce happiness, that there are substitutes for justice, that just acts are not pleasant or good. It may be improper to question the tradition; but, once questioned, its internal contradictions lead to the same conclusion as that of both Thrasymachus and Glaucon. Either the tales are true, and one should *seem* rather than *be* just; or they are not true, in which

case nature, the only substitute for them, teaches the same thing. We live within a horizon constructed by the poets, a horizon bounded by the presence of the gods. Cephalus, who spends his old age using his money to placate the gods' possible wrath at his earlier unjust deeds, is most representative of this human condition. There is no other available account of the sanctions of justice, and this one is not adequate to make it choiceworthy.

Thus Adeimantus, too, wishes to hear a new and adequate praise of justice, but what he asks for is different from what his brother asked for. Just as the latter desired an argument for pure and earnest dedication, so Adeimantus now reveals his deepest wishes by insisting that justice be easy and pleasant. It should in itself incorporate the advantages conventionally said to result from its practice. The poets promise just men great honors and sensual pleasures in this life and the next. Without making it quite explicit, Adeimantus longs for justice itself to be like or to be an adequate substitute for these honors and pleasures. Justice is always said to be hard, and there are ways to get around its necessity. If it is so unpleasant, why be just? As he says, in these conditions only a man whose divine nature renders injustice distasteful to him, *or* one who has knowledge, would resist the opportunity to do injustice. In order to be convincing to both Glaucon and Adeimantus, Socrates must show that justice satisfies even the man who loses everything for it, and that his happiness is akin to the sensations of the man immersed in the pleasures of the senses.

At the conclusion of the unjust arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus, Socrates professes his incapacity to succeed at a task of the magnitude of the one imposed on him. But he recognizes that piety forbids him to abandon justice under attack. Under pressure from the entire group he agrees to defend justice. However, he does not respond directly to the questions of his young companions. Rather than criticize their arguments or present a counter argument of his own, he invites them to share an adventure with him. They are to join together in the greatest and most revealing of political acts, the founding of a city. Socrates thus engages their desire for glory; although they are not indifferent to the desires which moved the other speakers, they, and particularly Glaucon, are animated by a different passion: it is not money that they love so much, but honor. Thrasymachus had offered them tyranny, the highest position in the city. Socrates inflames their imagination with even grander dreams. The founders of a city are more powerful and more revered than are its tyrants. All succeeding generations honor them; they have none of the obloquy attached to the tyrant. Socrates outdoes Thrasymachus and offers more attractive food for reflection. Thrasymachus, with his training in rhetoric, also offers the means of attaining the object he proposes, and Socrates has no substitute for that. But the very attractiveness of the goal proposed causes them to neglect its

impracticality. Socrates succeeds with them because he begins by giving them at least part of what they want. Socrates takes Glaucon and Adeimantus to the limits of politics, and it is at the limits that one can see both the nature and the problems of politics. We have learned that justice is a political question: can there be a regime whose laws are such as to serve the common good while allowing each of its members to reach his natural perfection? If not, life will be eternally torn between duty to the city and duty to oneself. In pretending that they are founders, Glaucon and Adeimantus at once discover that they must care for justice. In this case at least, the satisfaction of their desires is identical with the concern for justice.

Socrates, momentarily at least, accepts Glaucon's view that things can be understood by their origins. They are about to watch justice coming into being in order to see if Glaucon's account was correct. The decision to look for justice in a city first, and the consequent distinction between justice in a city and justice in an individual man, keep constantly before us the question whether the justice which makes a city healthy is the same as that which makes a man healthy. On the answer to this question depends the answer to the question whether it is advantageous for a man to devote himself to the city. We must first discover what a healthy city is and what a healthy soul is. The very coming to awareness of such a city and soul transforms and educates these young men.

(*369b–372e*) The first city is constructed by Socrates and Adeimantus, without the help of Glaucon. Thus it reflects the tastes of Adeimantus. It is an easy place: there is no scarcity, and justice takes care of itself. Men join together because they are incomplete, because they cannot provide for their needs themselves. Their intention is not to have more than others but to have enough for themselves. As long as there is no scarcity they will be peaceful, and the arts, with the cooperation of nature, produce enough to content them. Each man chooses an art according to his natural capacities so that nothing in life goes against the grain of the inhabitants' desires or talents. Each contributes according to his ability and receives according to his needs. In such a city, there is an immediate identity between selfish interest and the common good. Hence there is no need for men to be governed. The city is really the perfect community of artisans envisaged in the discussion with Thrasymachus, for each man devotes himself exclusively to his own art, his own good resulting from that dedication. The invention of money makes this possible. In this city it is not of value in itself and is not pursued as an end in itself. That development would be the result of inflamed desires. Here money simply facilitates exchange so that every artisan, as a result of practicing his own art, will have access to the products of the other arts. There is no separate wage-earner's art, for each art by itself produces the equivalent of money; and there is no need of an organizing

principle other than that provided by money, which represents the needs of the body. It sets the various arts and artisans in motion in the service of satisfying those needs. This is a city which takes the bodily needs as the only real ones; and whatever efforts of the soul and intelligence it calls into play are entirely directed to the preservation and comfort of the body.

By means of the example of this city, Socrates, in opposition to Glaucon, suggests that the bodily desires are very simple and easy to satisfy. In this he is not unlike Rousseau in his opposition to Hobbes. The more complicated desires, the ones that cause the injustice of which Glaucon has spoken, are the result of a mixture of the desires of the body with the desires of the soul. Although the entrance of these desires connected with the soul serves to corrupt this first city, Socrates looks on them with more favor than does Rousseau, for they are the first manifestations of a longing for a natural perfection higher than that of the body; he admits Glaucon's dissatisfaction as a legitimate objection to this city. Glaucon is a man of intense desires, and his daring is in the service of those desires. He is, to use Socratic language, an erotic man, one who lusts to have as his own all things which appear beautiful and good. His desires are inchoate expressions of his inclination to a fulfillment of which he is as yet unaware. His view of nature is actually a conventional one, ignorant of the distinction between the body and the soul and of the distinct and divergent demands of the two. A natural man, for him, pursues the same goals as do men in conventional societies but without the restraints those societies always impose on their members. He takes ruling to be merely a means to the acquisition of certain things which most men believe to be good and which all serve the body's desires. Actually his desire to rule is the expression of an independently noble impulse which, if fully developed, would find its satisfaction only in contemplation and would wish to overcome the body's desires in order to enjoy its own peculiar pleasure undisturbed. His passionate nature has been tutored by the common opinions about what is good and by the materialist philosophy of which he has heard. Glaucon is thus a dangerous man but also an eminently interesting and educable one. His desires lead him to despise law and convention; as long as his limitless desires have as their objects the things he lists as desirable in his speech, he will long for tyranny. But it is precisely this freedom from law and convention combined with his passion that may enable him to climb to the human peaks. As is the case with all the young men most attractive to Socrates, Glaucon has a potential for good or evil. The conduct of his companions Critias and Alcibiades, both subverters of the Athenian democratic regime, caused Socrates to be suspected as a corrupter of the youth. Critias and Alcibiades were liberated but not educated. With Glaucon, we have the opportunity

of seeing how Socrates educates and his effect on the young. He undertakes a perilous activity but one full of promise.

Adeimantus is much more moderate than Glaucon, and he is made a part of his brother's education. What he represents is also necessary to the founding of the just city as well as to the philosophic life, both of which are judicious blendings of moderation and courage or manliness. A city, if it is to be well governed, requires citizens whose desires are not too great and are well controlled; and it must possess some men who are willing to risk their lives in its defense. A philosopher's bodily needs must be minimal and his soul must be daring. These are the simplest senses of moderation and courage and the role they play in a city and a philosopher. Glaucon, with his manly intransigence, makes the most important contribution of the two interlocutors; he gives the conversation its power and its height. Glaucon cannot endure his brother's satisfaction with what he calls a city of sows and causes a new and luxurious city to be founded. But Adeimantus purges that luxurious city and makes it possible for its better potential to be realized.

This first city is obviously impossible. It depends on an unfounded belief in nature's providential generosity, in a "hidden hand" which harmonizes private and public interest, a belief to which Adeimantus would like to subscribe. This city is also undesirable, as will soon become clear. The fact that Socrates says that it is the true city does not mean that he thinks it could come into being or that he would wish it to do so. Rather, by this assertion, he implies that the city really exists to serve the body and that this city, devoted to the satisfaction of the simplest desires, serves the body best. The emergence of other forms of desire complicates the city and brings misery to it. But that corruption is the condition of the growth of more perfect human beings. Perhaps Socrates' assertion that it is the true city is not in contradiction, but in agreement, with Glaucon's characterization of it as a city of sows.

Glaucon rejects the first city because it does not appeal to his taste: he does not like the food. His manliness always leads him to make a direct assault on the good as he sees it. He has been promised a dinner which seems to have been postponed indefinitely. At the first mention of eating, he looks on the bill of fare with the eye of a hungry man who has a delicate palate and imagines how he would like to satisfy his hunger. He finds the simple city does not meet his gastronomic standards; in it food is only nourishment, only for keeping men alive and healthy. Merely to live and be healthy is the way of sows. Human beings require more than life; they demand unnecessary refinements and pleasures. Desire causes him to sharpen his demands on the city. He may think his is only bodily hunger, but it is a spiritual hunger which will cause him to transcend this city and lead him toward another kind of fulfillment. He is getting an unwilling lesson in austerity, which will

aid him in sublimating his hunger. His wishes are always contradictory, for he always mistakes all of his great longings for bodily desires but cannot find satisfaction for them thus understood. His first long speech is another example of this tendency: while asserting the naturalness of perfect self-indulgence, he was at the same time insisting on a notion of justice which is the direct opposite of self-indulgence. He is an "idealist," in whatever direction he turns. He admires both the man who is perfectly self-indulgent and the one who is perfectly abstinent; in order to satisfy himself he would have to discover a way of life which combined both great eroticism and great moderation. This is an apparent impossibility, but he has before his eyes a man who has actually succeeded in making such a combination of opposites, and Glaucon need only recognize him for what he is to solve his dilemma concerning the best way of life. Socrates, according to his own account, is an erotic man, but his *eros* does not lead him, as it did Cephalus, to injure others or take what belongs to them. In order to satisfy his *eros*, he need not compete with other men to their detriment. He has no wealth and no honor; in fact he is despised and believed to be unjust. Yet he is happy. Finally he is executed for his very justice, but this will not cause him to regret his choice of way of life. He fulfills the harsh conditions Glaucon set for the just man, but also lives in great pleasure. He does not live without the ordinary pleasures because he is an ascetic, but because the intensity of his joy in philosophy makes him indifferent to them. Once Glaucon can see the possibility of such a way of life he will be cured of his desire for tyranny; already he has somehow divined the presence of such a way of life in Socrates. To be sure, he is not yet conscious of the nature of his own desires, or of desire in general, but in the revolt against the simple city he and Socrates are really allies. Glaucon finds no satisfaction in it; and there could be no Socrates living there, both because it is not advanced enough to give him the basis for a philosophic understanding and because such an idle, unproductive man would starve to death. Perhaps the objections of the two men are ultimately the same: the solution to the political problem embodied in this city is not a human one. A human solution requires the emancipation of desire, for only then can virtue arise. Humanity requires a self-overcoming; not because life is essentially struggle, but because man's dual nature is such that the goods of the soul cannot be brought to light without the body's being tempted and, therefore, without a tyranny of soul over body.

(*372e–376c*) Socrates agrees to join Glaucon in observing a feverish city, as opposed to the healthy one they had just been observing. One would think that they would do this only as a study in pathology, keeping the healthy model constantly before their eyes. Actually, the healthy city is forgotten and the good city is

constituted by a reform of the feverish city rather than by a return to the healthy one. No serious attempt is even made to look for justice in the healthy city. The new city founded by Glaucon's desire begins with an act of injustice. Since luxury creates scarcity, land must be taken from others. Not everyone can have a city which is sufficient to support a life of satisfaction. Hence, the city proper is formed, that is, the band of brothers who have enemies, who must make war and be warriors. It would appear from this presentation that war is requisite to the emergence of humanity; as the city of sows was gentle and reflected a fundamental harmony among men, so the city of warriors is harsh and reflects a fundamental conflict among men. Paradoxically this is the first human city. It cannot claim that it does not harm other men; its justification can only be in the quality of life it provides for its citizens.

Here there emerges a new class of men devoted to the art of war, and in their souls emerges a new principle, spiritedness. The warriors must be men who like to fight, who are capable of anger, who rush to the defense of their city and of justice. Spiritedness is a difficult motive to understand, and its character can only be seen by contrasting it with desire. Desires are directed to the satisfaction of a need: they express an incompleteness and yearn for completeness. Hunger, thirst, sexual desire, etc., are all immediately related to a goal and their meaning is simple. The goal of spiritedness is much harder to discern. Its simplest manifestation is anger, and it is not immediately manifest what needs are fulfilled by anger. Spiritedness seems characterized more by the fact that it overcomes desire than by any positive goal of its own. Moreover, the desires related to the body—which are the only ones that have appeared thus far—all have a self-preservative function, whereas spiritedness, on the contrary, is characterized by an indifference to life. It may indeed aid in the preservation of life, but it can just as well place honor above life. The city may exist for the sake of life, but it needs men who are willing to die for it.

At first sight, the warriors look like the practitioners of just another art, to be set alongside the arts of shoemaking and farming, but they are really the first ruling class and introduce the first principle of hierarchy into the city. Similarly, spiritedness at first sight seems to be just another quality of soul, like the qualities which made a man a farmer or a blacksmith, but it really represents a new part of the soul, one which will rule the desires and establish a principle of hierarchy in the soul. The various arts present in the first city, however diverse in skill or product, all serve bodily satisfaction and are practiced for money. Ultimately they are the same; their practitioners are all included together in what will be called the wage-earning class; although there are many differences among its members in activity and intelligence, from the decisive point of view they are the same—mere life is their goal. They do not represent any fundamental diversity of principle. The warriors'

art, however, is really different, and its services cannot be measured by money, for money is a standard for evaluating the contributions made toward the satisfaction of desire or the preservation of life. Spiritedness is beyond the economic system. The founders of modern economic science, who wanted it to be a universal political science, could do so only by denying the existence of spiritedness or understanding it as merely a means to self-preservation. Only men who pursue self-preservation and the gratification of bodily desire can be counted on to act according to the principles of economic "rationality."

Now there are two classes in the city, and the distinction between them is a purely natural one: one class is motivated by bodily desire, the other by spiritedness. The former can be counted on to pursue what we would call the economic goals. The latter has liberated itself from the single-minded concern for mere life. But the purposes of this class are not as yet clear. It seems that it is in the nature of spiritedness to be in the service of something, just as it is in the nature of soldiers to be in the service of something. Neither spiritedness nor the class which embodies it can be ends in themselves; their purposes come from outside of themselves. This class could be understood as a servant of the wage-earning class, but this would mean that the superior exists for the sake of the inferior. To understand the dignity of this element in the soul and in the city requires the discovery of a third and highest class which spiritedness serves and the end of which is as clear as that of the wage-earning class. This necessity for a third class is implied in the description of the warriors as noble dogs who guard a flock. Sheep dogs require shepherds. The warrior class would then be the link between the highest and lowest class, gaining its meaning from its service to the higher. The parallel of city and soul would apply in this case too. However that may be, the city needs defenders, and it also now needs rulers, for its feverish desires make living together impossible without control.

It is inevitable that the spirited warriors will rule in this city, for they are strong. In every civil society, there is one group that has the greatest strength, and it can and always does set down the laws in the terms suitable to it. Whatever the character of this class, the city's way of life will be determined by it. This is what Thrasymachus meant when he said that justice is the advantage of the stronger. The members of this class do not. necessarily possess wisdom or any other element of virtue. If Socrates and his companions wish to establish a good regime without having to compromise with mere power, it is this crucial class they must control and train. They need not preoccupy themselves with the wage-earning class, for it will be unable to resist the commands of the warriors. The instrument for controlling the warriors is education and, therefore, from this point forward education is the central theme of the *Republic*. The city's way of life depends on the character and hence the education of the rulers.

Socrates and Glaucon have established this class of spirited warriors to protect the city from its enemies, but they quickly become aware of its problematic character. What is to prevent these men who are so savage to foreigners from being savage with their fellow citizens? Although they are supposed to guard the flock, they are likely to exploit it. What in their nature will permit them to be gentle to their charges? Gentleness and harshness seem very like contrary characteristics, and good guardians thus appear to be impossible. But Socrates, on second thought, recognizes that the animals to whom they compared the guardians do combine gentleness and harshness: dogs are gentle to those they know and harsh to those they do not know. Socrates most surprisingly draws the conclusion that the good guardian is possible if, in addition to being spirited, his nature is philosophic. Judging friends and enemies by the criterion of knowledge and ignorance is, he says, the way of philosophy, and thus philosophy is the principle of gentleness. In a book famous for the proposal that philosophers be kings, this is the first mention of philosophy or philosophers. Philosophy is invoked in the city only for the purpose of solving a political problem.

This identification of dog-like affection for acquaintances with philosophy is, of course, not serious. It only serves to prepare the way for the true emergence of philosophy in Book V and to heighten the difference between philosopher and warrior. The philosophers are gentle men because they pursue knowledge and not gain; their object does not entail exploitation of others. The love of knowledge is a motive necessary to the rulers of this city in order to temper their love of victory and wealth. But the philosophers are the opposites of the dogs inasmuch as they are always questing to know that of which they are ignorant, whereas the dogs must cut themselves off from the unknown and are hostile to foreign charms. They love their own and not the good. And this must be so, for otherwise they would not make the necessary distinction between their flock and those who are likely to attack it. The warrior principle is doing good to friends and harm to enemies. It is true that their love of the known extends their affections beyond themselves to the city; it partakes of the universalizing or cosmopolitan effect of philosophy. But that love ends at the frontier of the city. They remain the irrational beasts who love those who mistreat them as well as those who are kind to them. No mention is made of the fact that dogs do not characteristically love the flocks but the masters to whom the flock belongs and who teach them and command them to care for the flock. These dogs as yet have no masters and are therefore incomplete. The masters whom they will know and hence love are philosophers and knowers. The dogs' nature opens them to the command of philosophy but does not make them philosophers.

(*376c–383c*) After Socrates and Glaucon have established the necessity of a nature combining spiritedness and gentleness for the warriors, Adeimantus takes his brother's place in the discussion, and he and Socrates begin the education of that nature. On the basis of the description of the warriors' function, one would have expected that their education would be in the art of bearing arms—but this is not even mentioned. The entire discussion concerns the character of their souls and largely deals with the effects of music—the lovely domain of the Muses in which men charm their passions when at peace. Socrates focuses on the contents of poems, thereby implying that the other elements of poetry are only accessories used for the purpose of better conveying a theme or a teaching. The poets are taken most seriously as the makers of the horizon which constitutes the limit of men's desire and aspiration; they form the various kinds of men, who make nations various. Men's views about the highest beings and their choice of heroes are decisive for the tone of their lives. He who believes in the Olympian gods is a very different man from the one who believes in the Biblical God, just as the man who admires Achilles is different from the one who admires Moses or Jesus. The different men see very different things in the world and, although they may partake of a common human nature, they develop very different aspects of that nature; they hardly seem to be of the same species, so little do they agree about what is important in life. Everything in the city stems from the beliefs of those who hold power and are respected in it. If poetry is so powerful, its character must be a primary concern of the legislator.

The reform of poetry is most immediately directed to Adeimantus and the teaching he drew from poetry in his speech in favor of injustice. On the basis of the "reformed" poetry, Adeimantus could not have come to his conclusions. The gods do not give evil lots to good men, or good ones to bad men, nor can they be moved by prayer. Just men and just deeds are the only ones celebrated. There is nothing in the poetic universe which would make men think that injustice profits men or gods.

The critique of poetry is divided according to the most important effects its representations have on men's beliefs, in particular, their beliefs about the gods, courage, and moderation. Justice cannot be treated here, Socrates says, because they have not yet decided whether justice is good or not, and that would be essential to such a discussion. The beliefs about the gods and the poetic depiction of them are the first topic Socrates and Adeimantus undertake. Courage, moderation, and justice-three of the four cardinal virtues defined in the *Republic*-are each mentioned in the context of the critique of poetry, but the fourth, wisdom, is not. It would seem necessary to infer that the warriors are not to be wise and that the beliefs about the gods are their substitute for wisdom. Those beliefs about the gods are a nonphilosophic equivalent of knowledge of the whole. The first segment of the

study of poetry constitutes, therefore, a theology, a theology not true but salutary. Its doctrines are simple: the gods are good; they are the cause of the good; and they do not deceive. Nothing is said about the nature of the gods' relations with men or whether they care for men at all. Similarly, there is no assurance that these are the Olympian gods or that they have anything in common with what Adeimantus understands a god to be. Certainly Cephalus' piety, based on appeals to the gods for leniency, becomes, in this light, highly questionable. It is not even clear that it is sensible to pray to such gods.

A closer look at Socrates' prescriptions for the representations of the gods shows that they are not, in his view, all powerful and that they are subordinated to rational principle. They must be good and can only cause good; the deeper teaching implied here is that the good is the highest and most powerful principle of the *cosmos*. As opposed to the earlier views of the first things which the poets express, chaos is not the origin of all things; and the universe is fundamentally a *cosmos*, not a battlefield of contrary and discordant elements, as the poets represent it to be in their terrible tales of the family lives and wars of the gods. Those earlier views are not proved false here, but it is manifest that in such a world nobility and justice have no cosmic support; low can win over high, and the noble things can be in conflict with the necessary ones and with each other. In the new theology the higher is not derived from the lower, and the good is first. Similarly, the gods themselves are not representatives of becoming as opposed to being; of all things, they are the most unchanging; they are not moved by the desires of the body which are the sign of weakness and change and dependence. Primacy is given to rest and eternity over motion and time. The gods are a prefiguration of the *ideas* which are known to the philosophers. The man who believes in these gods, while loving the city and justice, will not hate and consider impious the philosopher who teaches the *ideas*.

A further important consequence of the discussion about the gods follows from the fact that the gods do not lie. In the discussion with Cephalus it was indicated that just as human justice sometimes requires not repaying debts, so it sometimes requires not telling the truth. That gods never lie would seem to imply that they have nothing to do with men and are not their friends. The world in which men live contains evil as well as good, and, although the dominance of the good in the *cosmos* at large is reassuring for the human estate, it does not perfect it. Men cannot live like the gods. Later we are told that rulers must lie; hence the gods are not rulers, and rulers cannot imitate the virtues of gods. Statesmen require a human prudence in which the gods can give them no guidance. This reform of the poetic account of the gods leads to the consequence that in the future the poetic depictions of the gods cannot serve as models for human conduct.

(*386a–392c*) These beliefs about the gods, Socrates says, will make the warriors men who honor the gods and ancestors and who are serious about their friendship with one another. This means that the proper opinions about the gods will cause the warriors to be both pious and just in the common meanings of these terms. Next comes courage, the virtue governing and perfecting spiritedness. It does not depend so much on beliefs about the gods, whose place is usually held to be in the heavens, but on beliefs about Hades, the home of the dead, which is generally thought to be beneath the earth. Homer's description of Hades is repulsive and frightening, and Socrates asserts that men who believe it cannot be courageous. Here Socrates' critique is completely negative; he simply says such things must not be said. He does not, as he did with the gods, tell what must be said. He does not even say that Hades exists or that there is any life after death. The existence of some kind of gods seems less questionable than the existence of an afterlife. Strangely, Socrates insists only that death should not be frightening, without paying any attention to the salutary effect such fear might have. Apparently, it is not only the warriors who are liberated from their terrors about a life to come, but also men like Cephalus. This terror caused Cephalus to try to live justly in his old age. But it also made him unable to participate in this discussion. Socrates is looking for another way to make men love justice, one which does not force them to turn away from this life and to be hostile to reason.

Socrates wishes to expunge all of these disagreeable stories about Hades from the literature. But in so doing he seems to destroy the virtue of courage. If there is nothing terrible in death, then the sacrifice of life is not particularly praiseworthy. It would not require the overcoming of fear. Socrates' intention is not, however, to turn the warriors into dependable automatons. His true intention comes to light in the seven quotations from Homer, concerning Hades, he cites at the beginning of this part of the discussion. All but the central one have to do more or less directly with Achilles; so indeed do most of the Homeric passages cited in what remains of the discussion of poetry. Socrates brings Achilles to the foreground in order to analyze his character and ultimately to do away with him as *the* model for the young. The figure of Achilles, more than any teaching or law, compels the souls of Greeks and all men who pursue glory. He is the hero of heroes, admired and imitated by all. And this is what Socrates wishes to combat; he teaches that if Achilles is the model, men will not pursue philosophy, that what he stands for is inimical to the founding of the best city and the practice of the best way of life. Socrates is engaging in a contest with Homer for the title of teacher of the Greeks —or of mankind. One of his principal goals is to put himself in the place of Achilles as the authentic representation of the best human type. One need only look at their physical descriptions to recognize that they are polar opposites. Socrates is

attempting to work a fantastic transformation of men's tastes in making the ugly old man more attractive than the fair youth.

Now, it is perfectly obvious that Achilles, although he believed that Hades was a dreadful place, was still able to be courageous. Socrates cannot seriously mean that the view of Hades presented by Homer necessarily makes a man a coward. In the *Apology*, where he most forcefully states his superiority to the fear of death, Socrates identifies himself with Achilles. It is not for a failure of courage that Socrates is reproaching the heroes. What he objects to is the price such men, given their understanding of death, must pay in order to face it. With his analysis of Achilles, Socrates is actually beginning a critique of the courage based on spiritedness which is thus also a critique of the warrior class of his city. The surface presentation of spiritedness and spirited men in the *Republic* is that they are easily educable and can become the foundation of the good city. This is a necessary presupposition of the good city. But berieath that surface runs a current which shows that spiritedness is a most problematic element of the soul and the city, and that the good city is hence most improbable.

Spiritedness first appeared in the city as the means to protect its stolen acquisitions. And this is a key to the nature of spiritedness: it is very much connected with the defense of one's own. This is particularly true in the case of Achilles whose anger is aroused by Agamemnon's taking away his prize of war, the maid Briseis, and whose rage is the result of the loss of his friend, Patroclus. If we take Achilles as the model of the spirited man, we see that anger is particularly directed toward punishment of those who take away one's own. Although anger causes men to be willing to sacrifice life, it is somehow connected with preserving those things which make life possible. Now, it is in the nature of human anger to seek for justification. It is difficult for a man to be angry when he is convinced that what is taken from him does not belong to him or that his losses or sufferings are his own fault. Anger requires something or someone to blame; it attributes responsibility to what injures, and it is closely allied with the sense of justice and injustice. Unfortunately, it is unreasoning and can easily mistake its sense of injustice for the fact of injustice. It can support reason in legitimate defense and punishment, but it may also oppose reason, for it is unwilling to admit anything that calls into question the rightness of its cause. Anger may be educated to become a very generous passion, arousing itself at the sight of whatever appears to be injustice; but no matter what the substance of the charges of injustice it makes, no matter how selfish the interest it is really protecting, it is always accompanied by the conviction that it is just. Anger is always self-righteous; it is at the root of moral indignation, but moral indignation is a dangerous and, although necessary, often unreasonable and even immoral passion. The tendency of anger is to give the color

of reason and morality to selfishness. This has been revealed by the only character in the dialogue who has expressed anger; Thrasymachus' anger defends the city's own against philosophy when philosophy threatens the city's injustice. Spiritedness is the only element in the city or man which by its very nature is hostile to philosophy.

In order to overcome fear of death, spiritedness requires an almost fanatic fury; for, although the hero loves honor, he admits that it is better to be a slave on earth than a king in Hades. For him to be heroic is literally unreasonable; he must overcome his reason in order to be a hero. He is an enemy of reason. The alternatives as he sees them are either a reasonable but ignoble attachment to life or a noble but unreasonable willingness to die. Anger permits him to conquer the fear of terrible things; but in so doing it exacts a high price, for it forces the man, whose existence is threatened and whose prospects are so bleak, to attach too high a value and cosmic significance to the sacrifice of that existence. It cannot face the senselessness or accidental quality of a particular death and violently resists anything which would rob it of its meaning. In other words, anger provides unreasonable reasons for heroic action. It sees acts of injustice and duties of punishment everywhere. That is why Achilles treats lifeless bodies as though they were men and scourges them; that is why rivers that resist him become gods who defy him. This does have the effect of elevating his heroism to fantastic heights and of making him capable of the most extraordinary deeds, but only at the cost of investing the world with absurd meaning, only by believing in, and perhaps fabricating, demonic beings who minister to and justify his anger. By changing this view of death, Socrates hopes to curb the extremes of the warriors' spiritedness without giving up the advantages it brings.

The discussion of courage, which can be viewed as an analysis of the character of Achilles, is followed by a discussion of moderation; and once again Achilles assumes a central role. In the curious account given by Socrates, moderation is not, as would be expected, primarily control of the bodily desires but obedience to rulers. Though Socrates does not say so explicitly, it is clear that anger is the main cause of disobedience to rulers, and that Achilles is the very model of the disobedient subject. His anger, closely allied with his self-respect, makes him an unreliable subject of rulers. Socrates charges Achilles with love of money, of being mercenary. Superficially this is unfair. He is not avaricious; it is Phoenix who suggests that he accept gifts, and not because of their value but because they would be evidence of Agamemnon's humiliation. Achilles does not follow the advice. But in a deeper sense, it *is* just to accuse Achilles of attaching undue significance to property, for he does destroy his friends and countrymen because his possessions have been taken from him by the ruler. Such a man would make a poor citizen of

the good regime which is being founded. In it there is no private property and the rulers decide what belongs to a man. Achilles would resist them, as he did Agamemnon, claiming that it is just that he keep what belongs to him. His resistance to Agamemnon appears to stem from noble pride, but that pride has its roots in excessive love of one's own. Spiritedness is the cause of phenomena as diverse as kicking the chair over which one has stumbled, disobedience to rulers, punishment of philosophers, and insolence to gods; and the true character of these phenomena can only be seen in their common source. The real problem treated in these passages is, therefore, not that of making the guardians courageous but of converting that primitive courage they possess by nature into civil courage. And that is the work of a poetry which leads to moderation.

The pure form of spiritedness—that exhibited by Achilles—implies a certain "tragic view of life and the world," according to which justice receives no reward in eternity, and noble things are no more supported by nature than base ones. The only cure for this illness is that philosophy which consists of "learning how to die," the philosophy of which Socrates was the master. Philosophy leads to lack of concern with one's own; it is concerned with things that are not threatened, that exist always. The activity of philosophy—the soul's contemplation of the principles of all things—brings with it a pleasure of a purity and intensity that causes all other pleasures to pale. For the philosopher, living as most men do is equivalent to living in Hades as conceived by most men. He need not live according to myths which assure the permanence and significance of things which are not permanent or significant. Death is overcome by a lack of concern with one's individual fate, by forgetting it, in the contemplation of eternity. This is a life both noble and reasonable. The central quote among the seven at the beginning of Book III refers to Teiresias, a man who was wise on earth and who alone among the shades in Hades still possesses prudence or wisdom. Perhaps even Homer suggests that wisdom can exempt a man from the miseries of Hades. But the warriors are not wise and cannot enjoy the consolation of philosophy; therefore they need consoling myths which make death less frightening, which lessen the need for that furious spiritedness that consumes the element of gentleness in its flames.

Socrates' intention in these passages of the *Republic* is made clearer by his behavior in the *Apology*. When he identifies himself with Achilles there, he is trying to impress his audience with his dedication to philosophy; and nothing impresses the vulgar so much as a man who is willing to die for a cause. Therefore Socrates assimilates himself to the most popular example of such a man. He indicates that the members of the jury are men who fear death and that he himself does not. The jurors are like Achilles inasmuch as they hold that property, family, friends, and city are the good things. The only way they could overcome their fear of death,

their fear of the loss of these perishable things, is as Achilles did—in defense of those things, in defense of their own. But this spirited defense of one's own is precisely what Socrates is suffering from; he is being condemned because he threatens Athens. Socrates' own fearlessness stems from other sources. After his condemnation he divides his jurors into two groups, those who had voted for condemnation and those who had voted for acquittal. To the former he speaks directly and in their own terms'. They assume that death is the worst thing, and so he threatens them; they will suffer for what they have done, and suffer what they most fear. Their anger will not protect them; Socrates' death will precipitate the worst rather than fend it off. To those who voted for acquittal he tells consoling myths to the effect that death is not to be feared. They are gentle men. Although they did not understand him, they were favorably disposed to him. He strengthens that gentleness within them by weakening the fears which would cause them to hate the cosmopolitanism of the accused man. Thus, imitating the function of tragedy, Socrates attempts to purge them of the pity and fear which can lead to fanaticism and enables them to share something of his own calm without knowing its source. The myths he tells the jurors who believed him to be innocent are akin to those he wants the poets to tell the warriors, who are potential jurors. Achilles and Socrates are both superior to the many, in particular in their mastery over death. But the difference between the mad Achilles and the Socrates whose death is depicted in the *Phaedo* is the measure of the difference between the two sources of that mastery. Socrates' death and the mysterious power it reveals are the new model of the heroic and must replace the Achillean one.

To understand the meaning and uses of music, as Socrates taught them, it is most helpful to turn to Shakespeare who reflected that teaching in Lorenzo's great speech to Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice*, Act V. This scene takes place at the end of a dark, unhappy play the theme of which was the struggle between Shylock and Antonio, each defending his own to the detriment of the other. Only here, in Belmont, is there harmony and beauty. In this utopia, love reigns. The discussion of music explains the possibility of that love and beauty. There is a cosmic harmony, music and love in the universe. Earthly music is the audible imitation of the inaudible music of the spheres. These heard harmonies have a mathematical structure which is akin to the mathematical principles at the base of the whole. Of all the arts, music is the one which most directly represents to the senses the intelligible order of things. We forget that cosmic music because we are "grossly closed in by a muddy vesture of decay." Our mortality leads us to be full of rage; earthly music ministers to that rage, calms us and makes us gentle. It reminds us, in all our separateness and opposition, of the dominance of harmony in our universe.

Socrates' musical education of the warriors gives their passions that music without which a man, according to Lorenzo, cannot be trusted.

(*392c–A03c*) If poetry is to be salutary for the warriors, it is not, according to Socrates, sufficient to change its content, but its form must also be changed. He forces the poetically inclined Adeimantus to give up the greatest charm of poetry—imitation. These are his reasons: the poet can make men believe that they see and hear his characters. This constitutes his real power—he enchants men so that they live the experiences he wishes to present. The poet hides himself behind his work, and the audience forgets, for the moment, that the world into which they enter is not the real one. The spectators have the sense of the reality of men and events which are more interesting and more beautiful than any they know in their own lives. This is what makes poetry so peculiarly attractive. The poet's hold on men is such that he can conceive a very high opinion of himself and a great sense of superiority over those whom he moves. But he is much less powerful than he thinks he is. Precisely because he must make his audience join in the world he wishes to present to them, he must appeal to its dominant passions. He cannot force the spectators to listen to him or like and enter into the lives of men who are repulsive to them. He must appeal to and flatter the dominant passions of the spectators. Those passions are fear, pity, and contempt. The spectators want to cry or to laugh. If the poet is to please, he must satisfy that demand. He is capable of making men cry or laugh; he can refine the expressions of the passions connected with tears and laughter; he can even, within limits, change the objects which move those passions; but he cannot alter the fact that he thrives on the existence and intensification of those passions. But it is precisely those passions which Socrates says the warriors must try to overcome. In the beautiful and exalted figure of Achilles who revolts against Agamemnon and grieves over the loss of his friends, they could find justification for their own temptations and fears. Men believe that in Achilles they see the reality of human perfection whereas he is only a distillation of themselves.

Moreover, poetry seems to require diversity of character and action and the intensity of passion; unhappy, suffering men or ludicrous ones are its favorite subjects. Virtuous men tend to be alike and are less likely to give way to the actions which poetry best imitates; and certainly moderation is not a virtue favored by poets. There is a certain tendency in poetry to make vice and even crime interesting because of the attractiveness of the men drawn to them. In other words, virtue is not necessarily the best choice of subject for a man who wants to write a beautiful epic or drama; the poet must subordinate his love of virtue to the requirements of his art.

Finally, and most important, the poet is unable to imitate the best kind of man, the philosopher. The philosopher would ruin a tragedy; and, although he might appear in a comedy, only certain effects of his activity, and not that activity itself, could be shown. A ruler can be shown ruling on the stage; and most other human types can also be shown as they are. But it is impossible to show a philosopher philosophizing. The Socratic critique of poetry is not only that the epic, tragic, and comic poets have not chosen as heroes the most admirable human types, but that their forms make it impossible for them to do so. What is needed is a form of poetry which is not compelled to make what is not truly highest appear to be highest. Ultimately the Platonic dialogue with its hero, Socrates, is that form. At this level of the discussion, however, Socrates leaves it at banishing most poets and insisting on a simple poetry which uses little imitation and, when it does use imitation, imitates only good men in their good moments. He does so because he wishes to protect the warriors' hard-won moderation. He also does so because he does not want them to believe that the heroes of poetry are the best men, for they are to be ruled by men very different from those heroes and must respect them.

Just as Socrates deprived Adeimantus of the greater part of the charm derived from imitation, so he deprives Glaucon of much of the charm of the powerful accompaniments of poetry, harmony and rhythm, to which he is particularly inclined and at the mention of which he rejoins the dialogue. Harmony and rhythm move the passions in the most primitive way, speechlessly appealing to irrational fears and pleasures-which are themselves speechless. They possess a man and give him a deep sense of the significance of his sentiments. Socrates ruthlessly subjects harmony and rhythm to the tales he wants told. Only those rhythms and harmonies which evoke the feelings appropriate to the new heroes are acceptable. Instead of letting words follow music, a temptation apparently involved in the nature of music's appeal, speech, *logos*, guides the music completely. Thus Socrates has made himself the master of poetry; he controls what it represents, how it represents, and the accompaniments which intensify its appeal. This mastery has been gained, though, only at the cost of what lovers of poetry find attractive in it.

However, with Glaucon, as opposed to his brother, it is not only sacrifice that is demanded. Adeimantus' disposition is such as to accept severe austerity when he sees its necessity for the preservation of the city he is in the process of founding or the furtherance of that comfortable justice he asked for in his speech and was contented with in the city of sows. But Glaucon, on the other hand, insists on what is good for himself, and the community is only of secondary interest insofar as it serves that goal. He, therefore, must have sufficient reasons for his sacrifices; and to him Socrates reveals the positive purpose of the warriors' education. The warriors are to be lovers of the beautiful, particularly of beautiful souls. The products of the

fine arts are to be used to surround them with imitations of the beautiful things; those imitations will give the warriors the habit of seeing beauty in the deeds, characters, and speeches of virtuous men and hence teach them to love the virtue whose various aspects they see represented. Imitation must not flatter the passions, but transform and sublimate them. The severe moderation of the bodily desires which Socrates has imposed is the condition of the liberation of the love of the fair and the virtuous. The needs of the body, if dominant, lead to ugliness, no matter how it is adorned; for their satisfaction requires discord and vice. The warriors, prepared by restraint of their desires and habituated to the vision of noble men, will shun Thrasymachus' thieves and tyrants, not as a result of moral principle but as a matter of taste. The warriors will be more politically reliable because the *eros* of the beautiful, a grace and delicacy of sentiment and action, will temper their pursuit of their self-interest. Glaucon now sees that *eros*, properly educated, has a place in the new order and thus accepts the efforts requisite to that new order. In attempting to grasp what Socrates is trying to achieve here, it is again most helpful to turn to Shakespeare's poetry. The wise Prospero, who must rule unwise men in his little island city of the *Tempest*, uses three kinds of motivations to insure their political good conduct. The slavish Caliban can be motivated only by pinches and blows. The covetous Alfonso and his cohorts are, like Cephalus, restrained by the equivalents of conscience and the fear of divine punishment. But Prospero's favorites, to whom he intends to hand over his rule, are lovers of the beautiful who need no harsher constraints. Ferdinand and Miranda are each struck with wonder at the aspect of the other's beauty. Each longs to be worthy of the other and is eager to perform the deeds which will win approval. This is a gentler, surer, and more human path to virtue.

(*403c–412b*) After music, which would seem to be the training of the warriors' souls, Socrates turns to gymnastic which would seem to be the training of the warriors' bodies. One might have expected that this would be the most important part of the education since these men are being trained for combat; they are artisans of victory in battle and they must learn their art at least as well as any of the other artisans. However, Socrates treats the subject as though the men did not have bodies and as though the use of arms was not the cause of victory. He asserts that the possession of virtue assures victory; technical skill and chance play no role. This is an unwarranted assertion, as any experience of life will show. But it is not entirely implausible within the context of this city. It will soon become evident that these warriors will do little if any fighting outside the city, that the city will have little foreign policy, and that their function is much more to control the vices of the desiring or wage-earning class. Therefore the control of the warriors' predatary

inclinations and the encouragement of their dedication to the common good is more important than their fighting skill. But, still, Socrates' whole treatment of the good city seems to neglect the problems involved in getting and keeping the things which make the good city possible. This neglect, however, is deliberate, and recognizing it makes one aware of the problem of the good city and the good life—that is, that there is a tension between the activities necessary to preserve life and those necessary to live it well. The satisfaction of the body's demands, which is the pre-condition of living any kind of good life at all, can easily become an end in itself. Socrates directs his attention exclusively to the perfection of the soul, as though its demands were in perfect harmony with those of the body, for the difficulty posed by the body is made clear and precise only by acting as though it did not exist, or at least as though its demands never contradict those of a good city or philosophy.

The discussion of gymnastic is in keeping with the neglect of the body which characterizes the entire *Republic*. But in this case the body is peculiarly difficult to neglect, and it would seem that here Socrates would have to admit that man is a dual being and discuss the relation of body and soul. However he continues to insist that his warriors are simple, as opposed to complex, beings. The cause of a healthy body is a healthy soul; and if a body does become diseased, nature must be allowed to take its course. In other words, we are asked to believe that the soul controls the body perfectly, that good souls cannot be joined to bad bodies and, at the same time, are told to forget the evidence to the contrary provided by sick men and the existence of an art of medicine which ministers to men's bodies and not their souls.

Inevitably, then, since gymnastic has little to do in keeping men's bodies healthy, the discussion turns from a description of gymnastic into an attack on medicine which looks to the care of diseased bodies without regard to the health of the soul. Doctors, according to Socrates, are required in cities for the same reason as judges—because there is a failure of moderation. When men desire too much, they take from others and must appear before a judge; the same inflamed desire also disrupts the body's harmony, and the men thus diseased must submit themselves to a doctor. Immoderation is the cause of all ills of body and city. Both judges and doctors should be kept out of the city as much as possible. The particular object of Socrates' apparent scorn is Herodicus, the founder of advanced and complex medicine, who was a sickly man and invented an art which kept his ruined body alive. The valetudinarian is ridiculous and dangerous because he subordinates everything to keeping himself alive and has nothing to live for but that life; if his kind of caring for life were to become general in a city, the city's virtue would be undermined, everything in it would be harnessed to that purpose—the soul would exist for the body rather than the body for the soul.

Socrates opposes complex medicine with a simple, good medicine which was founded by the divine Asclepius and is described by Homer. Asclepius used ready methods which did not require the quest for rare medicines or any change in the patient's way of life. If these methods did not suffice, the patient was allowed to die. This may seem like a crude art of medicine, but Asclepius did not adopt it out of ignorance but because he was political or statesmanlike, meaning he adapted the art of medicine to the common good. This kind of medicine does not threaten the practice of the virtues and the simple devotion to them; it does not emancipate the body and permit it to have a life of its own. Thus Socrates finds in Homer a twin to the simple poetry he has just elaborated in opposition to Homer. Complex poetry causes men to attach too much significance to what is perishable, to what is their own; complex medicine causes men to attach too much significance to their bodies. Perhaps the two errors are really the same. As the new poetry is intended to make men strong in the loss of their lives, their properties, and their loved ones, the old medicine was intended to make them strong in the disease of their bodies.

Although Socrates' concern with the citizens' performing their duties makes his banishment of Herodicus' medicine comprehensible and even justifiable, it does not do away with the fact that Herodicus knew much more about the body than did Asclepius; nor does it do away with the fact that his art reveals the untruth of the myth concerning the simplicity or unity of man. To understand man one must understand his complexity, and to do that one must study his illness as well as his health, his vices as well as his virtues. Such a study is impossible in this city because it is too simple. Glaucon recognizes this when he warns Socrates that it will be difficult to have good judges in their city because the men in it will not have sufficient experience with the diversity of souls to be able to diagnose and treat them properly. Socrates chooses to ignore the question, but it is clear that he has more to learn from the experience of Herodicus and Homer—from complex medicine and complex poetry which know not only the good but also the bad-than he is here willing to admit. It seems that the arts—and hence intellectual perfection—flourish in an atmosphere which is inimical to the citizen virtue of the warriors. A soldier or an artisan who forgets his body and concentrates on his work is surely better at his trade, but the body cannot be forgotten by the man who wishes to have knowledge of the body and its relation to the soul. The demands of citizen virtue and intellectual virtue are different. What appears to be a concentration on the warriors' souls is actually a concern for the power of their bodies. If the warriors were to see the truth about bodies, they could not be trusted to control them. Their education is incomplete and so are they.

Socrates' denigration of the body goes so far that he ends by denying that gymnastic has anything to do with the body at all. Its real purpose is to train the

soul. Just as the spirited part of the soul needed softening, so the gentle or philosophic part needs hardening. Reason tends to be weak in that it puts itself into the service of the passions or gives way to the rage of spiritedness. It must be strengthened so that it can resist particular desires and angers in its quest for the universal truth. Gymnastic serves that function. In the preparation of the warriors' souls for good citizenship, Socrates also looks to their openness to philosophy and the salvation of any potential philosophers among them. Spiritedness and gentleness are the warp and woof of the soul, each necessary to its healthy functioning but in a delicate balance with one another. To alter the metaphor, the soul must be tuned like an instrument, by relaxing and tightening the strings; this is what education in music and gymnastic does. The proper tuning of the instrument is the precondition of citizenship and of philosophy.

At the end of the warriors' education—an education intended to make them good guardians of a peaceful people—it becomes evident that *the* virtue which has been encouraged is moderation. This education is now complete and the warriors are about to assume their functions, but there has been no training in justice. It seems possible to have good guardians who are not just. This can be explained only if moderation is an equivalent of justice. And moderation is, at least from the city's standpoint, such an equivalent. The main source of civic strife is competition for scarce good things, and those who can control their desires for these things are least likely to find it to their advantage to be seditious and break the laws. In the city of sows, the harmony of public and private interest was insured by the simplicity of desire, natural plenty, and the skill of the arts. Once desire has been emancipated, the virtue of moderation—understood as the control of spiritedness as well as desire—is used to re-establish that harmony.

(*412b–416d*) The next step in the establishment of the regime is the selection of rulers. These must be the older warriors who also possess prudence and military capacity and who care for the city. Although the other qualifications seem equally important, the only one discussed is that of caring for the city. The severe education of the warriors has not rendered them free of the temptations which might ultimately make them wolves instead of watchdogs. They still think of the good things as those which are scarce and which men wish to keep privately for themselves. Nothing in their education has as yet attached them to this city and its well-being. If they are to care for the city they must love it, and if they are to love it they must connect it with their own self-love: they will love the city most if they are of the opinion that the city's advantage is their own advantage. Apparently, this opinion is constantly threatened, either because it is not simply evident to natural reason or because reason can so easily be mastered by sophistic arguments or by

passions. Thus the most important criterion in the selection of the rulers is that they hold this opinion most solidly. The most elaborate techniques are used to test them. And even this does not suffice to guarantee that they will love the city. They must be showered with honors and rewards which will give them even more palpable proof of how advantageous the city is for them. But all the education, testing, and honors are not enough to reestablish the harmony between private and public interest which disappeared with the city of sows. The only remedy that Socrates can find is a great lie—the noble lie.

This famous lie consists of two very diverse parts. According to the first part, all the members of the city, and particularly the warriors, were born from the earth and educated and equipped prior to emerging from it. If the citizens believe the tale, they will have a blood tie to the country; their relationship to it will have the same immediacy as does their relationship to the family. Loyalty to a particular city always seems somehow questionable: why affection for these men rather than any or all others? The tale makes them brothers and relates them to this particular patch of land. It identifies city and regime with country, which is the object of the most primitive political loyalty; it gives the motherland life and the principles of the city body. Short of a universal state, nothing but such a tale can make a natural connection of the individual to one of the many existing cities. Moreover, in this way, the regime itself is lent the color of naturalness. The fact that regimes require human institution, as other natural things do not, calls their naturalness into question. But here the very functions which the regime has educated the citizens to fulfill are attributed to nature; the citizens grow into their political roles as acorns grow into oaks. Each might have wondered why he should be devoted to his particular specialty to the exclusion of all others; but now they see that the equipment of their arts belongs to them in the same way their bodies do. This regime is also vulnerable because it conquered or stole the land in which it is established; this imperfect beginning gives ground for later men to argue the right of the stronger in their own interest. This tale provides for that eventuality by concealing the unjust origin of this regime (which we have seen) by a just account of its origin. On the basis of the lie, the citizens can in all good faith and conscience take pride in the justice of their regime, and malcontents have no justification for rebellion. Such are the advantages of autochthony.

The second part of the lie gives divine sanction to the natural hierarchy of human talents and virtues while enabling the regime to combine the political advantages of this hierarchy with those of mobility. In the Socratic view, political justice requires that unequal men receive unequal honors and unequal shares in ruling. This is both advantageous and fitting. In order to be effective and be preserved, the inequality of right and duty must receive institutional expression.

But, in practice, if inequality is an accepted principle it finds its expression in a fixed class to which one belongs as a result of birth and/or wealth, rather than virtue. Where there is no such class, equality is the principle that dominates; and, if in an egalitarian society there are hierarchies, they are based on standards like wealth or technical skill. The problem is to establish a regime in which the hierarchy established by law reflects the natural one, or in which virtue is the only title to membership in the ruling class. All unjust conventional inequalities must be overcome without abandoning the respect for the inequality constituted by differences in virtue. The difficulty, of course, stems from private interest and property. The more powerful always want to have more, and the weaker are willing to settle for equality. In order to demote the ruler, his special privileges and property must be taken from him; such changes meet the strongest resistance. Fathers are not inclined to see their sons deprived of their birthright. And it is not easy to make men without virtues see and accept their inferiority and give up hopes of rising. Reason and sentiment demand a solution by means of which men get what they deserve. But in all actual regimes there are one of two practical solutions: there is a hierarchy, but one that mixes nature with convention by making ruling depend on some more easily recognized and accepted title than virtue; or there is no standard or hierarchy at all. Each solution reflects a part of the truth, but each is incomplete. The lie provides a basis for a satisfactory solution, giving the hierarchy solidity while at the same time presenting men with a rationale designed to overcome their primitive inclination to value themselves at least as highly as their neighbors. The lie accomplishes this by introducing a god who fashions the citizens, and who at their birth mixes various metals into them to indicate their various values—gold for rulers, silver for warriors, and bronze and iron for artisans. If the citizens believe this, and if the citizens also accept the notion that there are means of seeing the various metals, they will have at least some counterpoise to their self-love. The lie implies that the city must have some wise ruler who can distinguish the qualities of souls, but here that is not underlined, and the emphasis is on preparing the citizens to accept both a stability and a movement which go against their grain. The first part of the lie differs from the second in that the former attempts to make the conventional attachment to the city and its regime seem natural, while the latter must provide a conventional support for natural differences which men have reason to want to forget. This is why, in the second part of the lie, a god must be invoked.

The lie, because it is a lie, points up the problems it is designed to solve. Perhaps no rational investigation of them could yield a basis for political legitimacy. In any event, the character of men's desires would make it impossible for a rational teaching to be the public teaching. Today it is generally admitted that every society

is based on myths, myths which render acceptable the particular form of justice incorporated in the system. Socrates speaks more directly: the myths are lies. As such, they are unacceptable to a rational man. But he does not hold that because all civil societies need myths about justice, there is no rational basis to be found for justice. His teaching cannot serve as an excuse for accepting whatever a society asserts is justice. The noble lie is precisely an attempt to rationalize the justice of civil society; it is an essential part of an attempt to elaborate a regime which most embodies the principles of natural justice and hence transcends the false justice of other regimes. The thoughtful observer will find that the noble lie is a political expression of truths which it itself leads him to consider. In other words, there are good reasons for every part of this lie, and that is why a rational man would be willing to tell it.

The Socratic teaching that a good society requires a fundamental falsehood is the direct opposite of that of the Enlightenment which argued that civil society could dispense with lies and count on selfish calculation to make men loyal to it. The difference between the two views can be reduced to a difference concerning the importance of moderation, both for the preservation of civil society and for the full development of individual men's natures. The noble lie is designed to give men grounds for resisting, in the name of the common good, their powerful desires. The great thinkers of the Enlightenment did not deny that such lies are necessary to induce men to sacrifice their desires and to care for the common good. They were no more hopeful than Socrates concerning most men's natural capacity to overcome their inclinations and devote themselves to the public welfare. What they insisted was that it was possible to build a civil society in which men did not have to care for the common good, in which desire would be channeled rather than controlled. A civil society which provided security and some prospect of each man's acquiring those possessions he most wishes would be both a more simple and more sure solution than any utopian attempt to make men abandon their selfish wishes. Such a civil society could count on men's rational adhesion, for it would be an instrument in procuring their own good as they see it. Therefore moderation of the appetites would be not only unnecessary but undesirable, for it would render a man more independent of the regime whose purpose it is to satisfy the appetites.

The Socratic response to this argument would be twofold. First, he would simply deny the possibility of a regime which would never be compelled to call for real sacrifices from its citizens. This is particularly true in time of war. A man cannot reasonably calculate that dying in battle will serve the long-range satisfaction of his desires. Therefore every civil society will require myths which can make citizens of private men. But in the case of such a selfish society it will be both very difficult to provide such myths, and they will be a distasteful parody of the reason

on which the society prides itself; what pretends to be philosophy will have to be propaganda.

Second, such a civil society can be founded only by changing the meaning of rationality. For this society, rationality consists in the discovery of the best means of satisfying desires. The irrationality of those desires must be neglected; in particular, men must neglect the irrationality of their unwillingness to face the fact that they must die, of their constant search for the means of self-preservation as if they could live forever. Socrates teaches that only a man who masters the desires of the body can see the true human situation and come to terms with it. Such mastery is the precondition of living a rational and satisfying life, but it is very difficult to attain, and men need all the help they can get if they are to succeed in attaining it. The civil society proposed by the men of the Enlightenment, far from encouraging such moderation, positively discourages it. It also ridicules those sometimes simple beliefs which would help to support a man's self-restraint and remind him of his mortality. Such a society would produce a race of self-forgetting, philistine men who would demand as their rulers men like themselves. According to Socrates, a noble lie is the only way to insure that men who love the truth will exist and rule in a society. The noble lie was intended to make both warriors and artisans love the city, to assure that the ruled would be obedient to the rulers, and, particularly, to prevent the rulers from abusing their charge. Apparently, though, it is not completely successful in overcoming the warriors' temptations. Socrates goes yet further: they are deprived of all private property, of everything which they might call their own to which they might become privately attached, particularly money, which admits of infinite increase and extends the possibility of private desire. And they are also deprived of privacy; they have no place where they might store illegally acquired things or enjoy forbidden pleasures. They are always seen by men, if not by gods, so that the secrecy needed for successful lawbreaking and the gaining of an unfounded good reputation are lacking. Injustice cannot be profitable for them. They are now completely political, the realization of Socrates' perfect artisan who cares only for what he rules and not at all for himself. They can have no concern other than the common good.

(*419c–427c*) It is not surprising that Adeimantus rebels at this point. He has accepted much that is distasteful to him and given up many of the charms of life for the sake of the founding on which he has embarked. He wants good guardians for his city. But the comparison of the life of the guardians with what he himself would desire is too much for Adeimantus. His original demands showed him to be a friend of justice and the political community, but he wanted an easy-going sort of life which the city would defend. He was content with the city of sows; nothing that has

come afterward in the construction of the good city has given him back the personal satisfaction he experienced there. He has the capacity for self-restraint, a certain austerity not shared by Glaucon. But this is in the name of that comfortable existence which too much desire would destroy. Now, in making the life of the guardians so hard, Socrates has taken away Adeimantus' motive for having allowed them to be trained so severely. Adeimantus, following the procedure he and Glaucon adopted in their attacks on justice, puts his objection in the mouth of another. The anonymous accuser asserts that Socrates is not making the guardians happy, and Adeimantus asks Socrates to make an *apology* to the charge. He joins Thrasymachus in bringing Socrates to trial. Thrasymachus charged Socrates with undermining the city, with teaching a doctrine which would lead to disrespect for the law. Adeimantus' charge is not entirely dissimilar. As a founder, Socrates is taking away from the citizens that for which they founded the civil order, their property, their privacy—their own. Socrates subordinates happiness to something else, or he robs men of their happiness. His teaching is a threat to that end for which everything is done. Here, as in the earlier accusation, the accuser's selfishness motivates his charge that Socrates is unjust. But there is also no doubt that Socrates is guilty as charged.

Socrates' defense is not, as might be expected, that these guardians are happy. One could have responded that they get a specific pleasure from doing their duty, that devotion to the city is naturally good for them. Evidently Socrates does not believe that this is the case. Men who engage in politics for the sake of private gain have a sufficient motivation for their conduct; but total devotion to the common good does not yet have a sufficient justification in the *Republic*, and the guardians are asked to serve without adequate compensation. Socrates' response is that he is talking about a happy city and not a happy group within it. Looking at it from the city's point of view, one can see the advantage of its possessing such a group of totally dedicated public servants. But this only postpones discussing the problem of the individual's relation to the city, which has already been postponed by the decision to see justice in a city first, and renders it more acute. Socrates treats the city as though it were an organism, as though there could be a happy city without happy men.

With this response, Socrates has not met Adeimantus' objection. It is a powerful objection, one that can be made by wiser men than the youthful, unphilosophic Adeimantus. Aristotle himself agrees that the guardians are not happy and that this speaks against the desirability of the regime. Even Aristotle, whom no one could accuse of encouraging a lax morality, compromises with men's wish to have something of their own, and the rulers in his best regime are property owners. Why then does Socrates insist on making such high demands on his rulers? Perhaps it is

because he is more interested in revealing a problem than in making a practical suggestion. By pushing the demand for dedication to the extreme, he brings to light precisely what it is in man that makes such dedication impossible and thereby indicates to practical men what compromises have to be made. Any deviation from this standard of dedication is indeed a compromise; for example, the devotion of Aristotle's rulers to the city is not quite pure, and the regime has to accept the injustice of making wealth one of the titles to rule. Virtue without wealth has no place in Aristotle's best regime; convention must be mixed with nature. Socrates is attempting to satisfy Glaucon's request; he is trying to show that political justice is good in itself, not because it can be a source of other advantages. Perhaps that request cannot be satisfied, at least on the level of Glaucon's original intention.

However, strictly political considerations are not sufficient to account for Socrates' procedure; it can be explained ultimately only in the light of the trans-political considerations which emerge later. On political grounds it would be wise to make the compromises necessary to make the guardians happy. But the concentration on the public and the common, the forgetfulness of the demands of the body, prepares the way for the introduction of philosophy which is the most universal concern. It is the concern with the private or particular as such that must be overcome if individuals are to philosophize and cities are to be ruled by philosophy. The guardian who is totally devoted to the common good is the prototype of the philosopher who is devoted to knowing *the* good.

Adeimantus is a secret lover of wealth, as is revealed by his rebellion at the abolition of private property. Therefore Socrates immediately turns to an attack on the effects of wealth on the city. This provokes Adeimantus into making a last stand in its favor. He objects that the city will not be rich enough to defend itself. Wars require money, and so some amount of acquisitiveness must be permitted. Perhaps sound domestic policy would discourage the acquisition of wealth, but priority must be given to foreign policy since the city's very existence depends on it. Adeimantus' objection, then, is the same as Machiavelli's: the best regime is a mere dream, for a good city cannot avoid ruin if it does not do the things which will enable it to survive among vicious cities. It is foreign policy which makes the devotion to the good life within a city impossible. One must be at least as powerful as one's neighbors and must adopt a way of life such as to make this possible. Poverty, smallness, and unchangingness cannot compete with wealth, greatness, and innovation. The true policy is outward-looking, and cities and men are radically dependent on others for what they must be. Without a response to this objection—which Machiavelli thought to be decisive for the rejection of classical political thought—the very attempt to elaborate a utopia is folly.

In his attempt to meet the objection, Socrates formulates a Machiavellian foreign policy in order to preserve the anti-Machiavellian domestic policy of his city. The city will be too poor to be very attractive as an object of conquest; its tough fighters will make it a dangerous enemy and it will join its potential attacker in attacking soft, rich cities. Furthermore, in order to prevent the allied city from becoming all-powerful, it will foment civil discord within it, siding with the poor, although the guardians' city does not believe the poor have justice on their side. In this way the city can live as though it had no neighbors and devote itself to whatever way of life it deems best. In relation to its neighbors, the city is not motivated by considerations of justice but by those of preservation. Justice has to do with the domestic life of the city and cannot be extended beyond its borders. This is a point to be considered when examining the analogy between city and man: justice is supposed to be the same in both, so one would expect that a man should behave toward other men as does a city toward other cities.

Socrates' argument persuades at least Adeimantus, and therewith his last reserves about the regime have been overcome. He becomes Socrates' whole-hearted ally. He now uses his moralizing severity against all enemies of the regime, particularly against poets and ordinary statesmen. Anything that might weaken his newly founded city is his enemy, and he is angry with those whom he regards as vicious. His conduct can be explained by reference to an observation he himself made in his long speech on justice. There he asserted that a man who truly knows that justice is better than injustice is not angry with those who do injustice; rather, he sympathizes with their ignorance, knowing that they are not responsible. The implication is that those who are angry at injustice do not know its inferiority, that their anger is a way of suppressing their own temptations, that they blame others for giving way to temptations that beset themselves. After the curious fashion of moral indignation, they attribute responsibility where there is none. For those who want to be just but hold the objects of injustice to be good, self-restraint is necessary; anger and blame are the means of that restraint. In these passages the contrast between Socrates' gentleness and Adeimantus' indignation is striking, suggesting that they represent the alternatives of knowledge and ignorance of the superiority of justice. It almost seems as though Socrates is incapable of the anger so necessary to political justice, and, therefore, can use Adeimantus to advantage here and elsewhere. Adeimantus' particular form of spiritedness, when tamed, is a scourge of injustice, a source of primitive justice.

(*427c–445e*) With the establishment of rules concerning the worship of the gods, the city is asserted to be complete and perfect. Its perfection must consist in its being the only city in which the rulers rule for the advantage of the ruled and

hence of the weaker—the exact opposite of Thrasymachus' description of rulers, but in accord with Socrates' and Thrasymachus' joint understanding of the artisan in the precise sense.

At last Socrates and his companions are ready to begin the investigation for which all their previous efforts were only the preparation. They must now look for justice and injustice in the city founded in their discourse. Socrates, at the urging of Glaucon, who here takes over from Adeimantus, suggests the following procedure for locating it: since the city is perfectly good, it must be wise, moderate, courageous, and just; therefore, they need only recognize in it the virtues they do know in order to identify what remains as justice. This procedure, however, is open to several obvious objections. Nothing has been done to establish that these four—and only these four—virtues are what makes a city good. Nor is there any indication that the interlocutors know what wisdom, moderation, and courage are, any more than they know what justice is. These virtues have not been thematically discussed here, but we know from other Socratic dialogues that they are as problematic as justice. But, most important of all, Socrates, without stating any grounds for so doing, assumes what he and his companions had set out to prove—that justice is good. Originally the question was: What is justice, and is it good? Now it has become: What good thing is justice? One is compelled to wonder why Glaucon accepts so great a change without comment. It may be because Glaucon is so eager to hear what justice is, because he is of the opinion that he and the others are finally at the borders of the promised land, that he does not, as it were, read the fine print. Moreover, this is his city, and for that reason alone it is good. Common sense dictates the notion that justice is something that has to do with a city and that a good city must possess justice. Glaucon has accepted this city and justice along with it. He could hardly announce that a city he has founded is not just.

However, Glaucon's original question has not been answered. In opposition to Thrasymachus, he had suggested that justice means that the strong man serves the weak to the neglect of his own advantage. The life of the rulers in this regime seems to support that suggestion. For the ruled to obey the rulers is strictly to their own advantage since the rulers are dedicated to them. But the doubt remains as to whether it is to the rulers' advantage to care for the ruled. A founder, for his own selfish reasons, may want the rulers to be just, but he does not thereby prove that it is good for them to be just. The assumption that justice is good and must be in the city is perfectly legitimate from the point of view of founders or men who are discussing a city. But the real question is postponed until the discussion of the individual: Is justice in the individual man the same as that in the city *and* does justice in the individual lead to good citizenship? First we look at the perfected city, and then at the perfected man. The issue is in their relation: Can a perfect man

become and remain perfect in a perfect city? Is justice good for him? This is identical with the question: Is the city natural? For man, and hence the good man, is surely natural.

Socrates and his companions experience greater difficulty in discerning justice than in discerning the other virtues. Justice, rather than far away in the heavens, is in a dark place at their feet. Even a cursory examination of what they find there reveals that justice is not necessary in this city. This is not too surprising, for the city came into being without justice being included in the specific way that courage, moderation, and wisdom were included. Indeed, when defined as each man doing his job or minding his own business, justice adds nothing to the city that is not accomplished by the other three virtues. The city needs wise men to command; it needs courageous men to overcome resistance to the wise commands; and it needs moderation to bind the city together into a whole and maintain the proper hierarchy of its parts. But where does that leave justice? Justice disappears here, even as it did when Polemarchus asserted that justice consists of doing good to friends, only to discover that it is the various arts that do good to men. This seemed unsatisfactory because of the fact that the arts can do harm as well as good—a doctor can kill as well as cure—so that something more than the arts is required. But now it appears that it is not justice which is necessary to supplement the arts; they need only belong to the proper order or whole. If the rulers are interested in the good of the whole city and its individuals, and if they command the artisans as to how they are to use their arts, nothing further is needed. Moderation, not justice, causes the artisans to obey the rulers. There is no temper or disposition of justice demanded of the citizens. Justice, in the city at least, means only the presence of the three other virtues.

Nevertheless, minding one's own business is not an unilluminating formula for expressing what is ordinarily meant by justice. Justice seems to involve doing good to others, but the busybody or meddler is somehow an imperfect type. In this city, if each does what properly is his to do, he also does good to others. Each keeps and does his own while benefiting others. Moreover, the simplest sense of justice, that expressed by Cephalus, is also satisfied here: obedience to the law is vindicated for the laws are good. Hence this city, in which justice is not a concern, meets the demands of justice defined by Cephalus and Polemarchus who are its advocates. And in this city Thrasymachus will no longer be able to allege the same reasons for despising justice. He will soon join Socrates' group of friends.

Socrates now turns to the investigation of the justice of the individual man, which is so crucial for Glaucon. This investigation quickly moves to a discussion of the soul; by treating the soul as the whole man, Socrates tacitly assumes the irrelevance of the body to the question of what justice in a man is. He and Glaucon

attempt to determine whether the soul has three parts, as does the city; if it does, the analogy would incline them to believe that they are of the same character and order as are the parts of a city and that a soul's virtues are the same as those of a city. They easily distinguish desire and reason as separate parts of the soul. Then, as might be expected, the crucial part and the one most difficult to determine is spiritedness. Is it separate or does it belong to one of the two other classes? Glaucon gives an obvious answer and one that accords with his own experience: it belongs to the desiring part. He is probably most angry when he does not get what he wants; surely his specific form of spiritedness leads him off to war in pursuit of satisfaction of desire for pleasure and victory. Socrates responds with an example in which spiritedness purportedly overcomes desire. Spiritedness is ambiguous: it may support or oppose bodily desire, or it may even itself be a kind of desire. But Socrates goes much further. He tries to make spiritedness look like a loyal ally of reason, as it were, reason's army, which forces the desires along the path of reason's commands. Socrates acts as though it were only in the cases of the most perverse kind of man that spiritedness opposes reason. Hence the soul is a unity in diversity and is strictly parallel to the city. The analogy to the auxiliary class in the city makes it plausible to assert that spiritedness is reason's companion and of a distinctly higher order than the desires.

But this is a most "optimistic" account of spiritedness, one that accords with that hopefulness about its control which is *the* condition of the founding of the city and that depreciation of the desires that is necessary to the city. Socrates, in order to prove the point that spiritedness is different from desire and serves to control it, tells the story of a certain Leontius who, on his way up to Athens from the Piraeus, observed that there were corpses on the public executioner's ground and desired to look at them. Something within him resisted the desire, but after a struggle, he gave way and looked. He then cursed his eyes and bid them take their fill of "the fair [or noble] spectacle." Careful reflection on this example reveals that it does not so simply support Socrates' thesis that spiritedness is essentially an ally of reason. One must ask why spiritedness opposes the desire to look at corpses and becomes angry with the eyes? Either it must be because the sight of death is repulsive to it and thus it cooperates with the desire for life, or because the contemplation of the corpses of criminals is ignoble and goes counter to the sense of shame induced by spiritedness. Whatever the explanation, its resistance to Leontius does not seem rational. As a matter of fact, spiritedness is fighting curiosity, a close kin of the desire to know, either because that desire is opposed by other powerful desires, or because it seeks to know the forbidden. Spiritedness appears to be capable both of allying itself with desire and of opposing the quest for knowledge. In the city the spirited class, although its education presented some difficulties, was largely salutary; but in the

soul it is more problematic. Socrates, because he is trying to persuade Glaucon to be a good citizen of the good city, gives him an inadequate account of spiritedness in the soul—one which gives spiritedness the same role in the soul as it performed in the city, while forgetting the differences between a soul and a city.

Primarily, what Socrates chooses to forget in his incomplete picture of spiritedness as merely reason's trusty tool is the fact that in some sense reason in the soul is a desire, and that spiritedness, to the extent that it opposes desire, opposes reason also. He was enabled to do this by asserting that reason in the soul is merely calculation, as it is in the city. A dry, calculating reason, concerned with directing the desires to a fulfillment consonant with the common good, is distinct from desire and need not conflict with spiritedness; but a reason erotically striving to know the first causes of all things, with a life of its own, indifferent to the needs of the here and now, is one of the most powerful desires and far removed from the city's primary concerns. Spiritedness will oppose it as surely as it does any of the other forms of *eros*. Reason exists in cities but only in the form of political prudence. Timocracy, the regime founded on spiritedness, is the regime most openly hostile to philosophy (*547e*). A city, like a man, desires wealth, needs food, and deliberates. But a city cannot reproduce or philosophize; all forms of *eros* are cut off from it. In this sense a city cannot be properly compared to a man. It can use the offspring of *eros*, whether children or thoughts, but it must merely make use of, or conventionalize, the activities which produce them. In order to make a man thoroughly political, one must suppress or distort all expressions of his eroticism.

In order to see what Socrates leaves out here, it is helpful to look again at the warrior class which is supposed to perform the same function in the city as does spiritedness in the soul. The warriors can, in the service of desires, take from foreigners as conquerors, or they can, in the service of the city as a whole and the rulers, defend against invaders. Within the city, they can side with the people, and hence the desires, against the rulers and reason, or they can side with the rulers, not against the people, but for the purpose of controlling and guiding them. The warriors are guided by general opinions, or rules, whose grounds they do not know and exceptions to which they cannot recognize. For example, they must detest men who do not appear to care for the city, who love foreign things, who call the law into question. Most such men would indeed be vicious, but Socrates would also be among them. They would instinctively hate him and want to punish him as an enemy, for, in their lack of reason and identification of all good with the city's good, they would be unable to distinguish him from the others. The rulers might be able to make the necessary distinctions, and the warriors would most likely obey

them; but one could foresee a situation in which the warriors rebelled against the rulers because the rulers broke the rules of morality they had inculcated in the warriors. But, at all events, from the point of view of the healthy city, perhaps men like Socrates should be repressed. In practice, spiritedness frequently rules over wisdom in cities, leading to crimes committed in the name of justice. Moral indignation led to the execution of the generals who were in command at the great Athenian victory of Arginusae, but who, because of a storm, were unable to satisfy the pious duty of recovering the corpses of their dead from the sea; this execution was carried out over the strenuous objections of the wise Socrates. Moreover, Socrates' own execution was a result of the same moral indignation. In both cases the general principle of the people was a valid one; but in both they failed to see the mitigating circumstances, not to say the moral superiority of the lawbreakers.

Within the individual soul, spiritedness expresses itself in similar ways. It can lead to the voracious conqueror or the proud protector of his own. It can also produce the angry, petulant man who flies into a fury at what opposes his desires. And, most interesting of all, it can result in the morally indignant man who punishes his own desires as well as those of others. But in the case of the soul this punishment of offending desires is more harmful than in the city. The soul in which reason is most developed will—like Leontius' eyes—desire to see all kinds of things which the citizen is forbidden to see; it will abound with thoughts usually connected with selfishness, lust, and vice. Such a soul will be like that banished poetry which contained images of vice as well as of virtue. Spiritedness, in the form of anger and shame, will oppose reason's desiring. This is why the austere, moral Adeimantus is much more opposed to philosophy than is the victory-loving, erotic Glaucon. Thus, spiritedness, which protected the city's health, stands in the way of the development of the soul's theoretical capacities and hence its health. Socrates in this passage abstracts from all other aspects of spiritedness and focuses solely on one of its functions—the control of desire. In so doing he makes explicit its political advantages and hints at the threat it poses to philosophy. The harmony of the parts of the soul is most questionable.

Socrates concludes that the soul has the same parts as the city and will be perfected by the same virtues. Thus the discussion of justice should be at an end; and Socrates does indeed try to turn to the discussion of injustice, which must be discerned if it is to be compared to justice. But, he will not be permitted to continue in that direction, for his interlocutors are not yet persuaded that it is desirable to be a member of this city, and want to know more about it. The identification of the good of the soul with that of the city has not been convincing to them. This is understandable, since it is purely formal to assert that a just soul is one in which each of its parts does its own work when one does not know the

nature of those parts or precisely what their work is. It cannot be assumed merely that they exactly parallel the pads of the city and their work.

Nothing as yet has indicated that the man who has a healthy soul will be identical with the citizen of the regime which has been established. Is the wise man, who makes full use of the powers of his reason, the same as the prudent statesman, who issues commands to the warriors and the artisans? Is his courage that of the warrior who holds the belief that what is good for the city is good for him, and is thus willing to die on the battlefield? Is his moderation that of an obedient subject, or that of a ruler who cares for the citizens and wishes to rule them for their good? And does his justice consist in doing some work which the city prescribes to him and is useful to it? Affirmative answers to all or any of these questions seem highly improbable. Glaucon's real question, however, was whether his happiness depended on being a good citizen, a law-abiding man. Socrates tries to give the impression that there is a harmony between the justice of the city and that of man by never suggesting that there might not be.

But it is a glaring problem, and Socrates' mode of presentation has rendered it even more obtrusive. As we have already observed, if the parallel of city and man is to hold true, then a man, like the city, should be interested only in himself and merely use others for his own advantage, as the city does. And in the present discussion Socrates has made it appear that the soul's health can be attained in isolation; as the good city's neighbors were only a hindrance in its quest for the good life, a man's neighbors might also be understood to he hindrances. In that case, he would want to strive for the greatest self-sufficiency. This impression is intensified by the fact that the body, whose needs tie a man to his fellows, has been treated here as though it did not exist. The parallel of city and man presented would tend to support the view that the just man—in the sense of the man with a healthy soul—would not want to be a good citizen in the good city. It would also seem that he would not want to be a tyrant, for his perfection seems to be independent of the city. When Socrates points out that a man with a healthy soul would not be likely to steal deposits, break oaths, commit adultery, etc., he does not prove that the just individual abstains from such deeds because he respects the laws or even cares for other men. The fact that the just man does not try to take advantage of other men could be as easily explained by a lack of desire for the objects involved as by attachment to the common good. In describing the conduct of such a man in relation to others, Socrates only tells of things he does not do, but never mentions any positive deeds of citizen virtue which he does do. It would seem possible to be a just man without being a just citizen, which goes further than anything Glaucon had suggested.

The apparent answer to the question of justice has only heightened the difficulty of that question, for we now have the just city and the just soul, and their relations are as mysterious as are the relations of body and soul. As a result of the spurious identification of city and soul, the nature of the soul has emerged as the decisive consideration in the understanding of justice. Given the magnitude of this consideration, it is no wonder that Socrates is eager, as he was in the beginning of the dialogue, to hurry away. It is also no wonder that his companions once again join together to stop him, for he owes them much more.

(*449a–473c*) In a scene that recapitulates the beginning of the dialogue, Polemarchus again joins with Adeimantus to "arrest" Socrates. They are more formidable this time, for they have now added Glaucon and Thrasymachus to their ranks. The dialogue begins anew. Socrates' companions have recognized, if only in a peripheral way, the incompleteness of the discussion of the soul, which they take to be an incompleteness of the discussion of the city. They want to know more about his statement that friends in the city have all things in common—including women and children—for this total lack of privacy means that a man cannot have a life of his own. Therefore a man's soul must be satisfied by the community or not be satisfied at all. They accuse Socrates of a crime, of doing injustice by robbing them of a part of the discussion. And they are right. Socrates wanted to do his duty to men and the city without devoting himself to them completely; he was keeping his way of life private. All the others could find their satisfaction and dignity in the city that has been established. But can Socrates? He is compelled to appear before the bar of that city; here he cannot give a mythical account of his life (as he did in the *Apology*) but must explain himself as he really is. This city claims to be the greatest good for men, to call for the highest loyalty, to satisfy the human potential. Now it must be expanded to see if it can include Socrates. This is the crucial test, for, if the highest activity of the city is identical to the highest activity of man, there is no justification for going beyond the city, for rebellion in heart or deed. The status of the city depends on this attempt.

Now Socrates proceeds to try to make public or common everything that remains private. Full communism, from Socrates' point of view the only form of just regime, requires not only the abolition of private property but also the sharing of women and children and the rule of philosophers. Women, family, and philosophy are all of the domain of the erotic, which seems to be what is most intransigently private. Up to now what Socrates has suggested has been severe, but not outlandish. The city is merely an improved Sparta, correcting its worst vices, while preserving its virtues. He has adopted the opinions of his well-born Laconophile interlocutors; Adeimantus is attached to Sparta because it is austere,

secure, and aristocratic; Glaucon because it is warlike. Socrates has improved on the Spartan regime by stopping the ruling class from persecuting the poor, by suppressing the secret lust for wealth, and by moderating the exclusive orientation to war. At the same time, he has softened the warlike temper of the men and given them the possibility of a certain openness. Now he must take advantage of that possibility and attempt to infuse the Athenian element into the Spartan regime. In order to complete his work, he will have to face three fantastic waves which threaten to engulf him. The first two waves—the same way of life for women as men and the community of wives and children—have never existed in reality or in the thoughts of serious men; they are the absurd conceits of a comic poet who only suggested them in order to ridicule them. And the last wave, the rule of philosophers, is a total innovation, beyond the wildest thoughts of that same comic poet who had also ridiculed philosophy.

Book V is preposterous, and Socrates expects it to be ridiculed. It provokes both laughter and rage in its contempt for convention and nature, in its wounding of all the dearest sensibilities of masculine pride and shame, the family, and statesmanship and the city. As such it can only be understood as Socrates' response to his most dangerous accuser, Aristophanes, and his contest with him. In the *Ecclesiazusae* Aristophanes had attacked the public in the name of the private, and in the *Clouds* he had attacked philosophy in the name of poetry. Here Socrates suggests that, if philosophy rules, the political can triumph over the private life. If he is right, he can show that Aristophanes did not understand the city because he did not understand philosophy, and he did not understand philosophy because he did not understand that philosophy could grasp the human things and particularly the city. The *Republic* is the first book of political philosophy, and attempts to show that philosophy can shed light on human things as no other discipline can. Socrates is the founder of the city in speech and, hence, of political philosophy. In Book V he tries to show the superiority of the philosopher to the comic poet in deed; he does so by producing a comedy which is more fantastic, more innovative, more comic, and more profound than any work of Aristophanes. Socrates with an air of utmost seriousness undertakes absurd considerations; in this he is already comic. If what he appears to teach seriously is impossible, as will prove to be the case, Socrates' comedy will be akin to the *Ecclesiazusae*. In that play the women of Athens try to institute what is just but politically impossible, and thereby they create ridiculous situations; Socrates surpasses them by radicalizing their proposals. If the perfection of the city cannot comprehend the perfection of the soul, the city will look ugly in comparison to the soul's beauty and be a proper subject of comedy; its pretensions will be ludicrous. Such a comedy will be a divine comedy, one calling for a more divine laughter. Only philosophy could produce it, for, as

Socrates will explain, only philosophy has the true standard of beauty. In appearing to disagree with Aristophanes about the city, Socrates shows that only he knows the true grounds of its inadequacy. Plato believes that his Socrates can argue better about man than Aristophanes, and that his arguments can culminate in better comedies. If this proves to be true, the total superiority of Socrates and his way of life will be manifest.

Socrates proposes that women should have the same education and way of life as the men; there should be a full equality of the sexes, and they must, as it were, share the same locker room. Socrates is aware that poets will laugh at this proposal and that it will be a subject of ridicule for men like Aristophanes. But Socrates asserts that the comic poets are in this merely serving Greek convention, either because they cannot themselves transcend convention, or because they are dependent on an audience of Greek men to whom they must appeal. Once Greeks, like the barbarians, were ashamed to see each other naked, but they were able to overcome that shame. A naked man would look ridiculous in a crowd of clothed men, to be sure, but why should men be clothed? In the gymnasium, public nakedness is no longer laughable. The Greeks showed that civilized men can be both moderate and unclad. Now they must go even further and make greater demands on their moderation. But does it make sense to say that it is only convention which prohibits the public association of naked men and women? Nakedness is forbidden because it encourages licentiousness, because civilized men need some mastery over their sexual appetites. Public nakedness is permissible where sexual desire is not likely to be aroused by it. Men can be naked together because it is relatively easy to desexualize their relations with one another; but the preservation of the city requires the mutual attraction of men and women. The city can forbid homosexual relations, and shame and habit can make the very notion inconceivable to them. But it cannot forbid heterosexual relations, and men and women could hardly be expected to be above attraction to one another at any particular moment. Hence the purpose of the gymnasia would be subverted. Law would at the same time encourage and forbid the mutual attraction of the sexes. The comic poets are not without justification; the sexual is necessary and must remain private. This is part of Socrates' attempt to politicize the erotic, to act as though it made no demands that cannot conform to the public life of the city. Once more, Socrates "forgets" the body, and this forgetting is the precondition of the equality of women. As a political proposal, the public nakedness of men and women is nonsense. Shame is an essential component of the erotic relations between men and women. The need for overcoming shame becomes clear in relation to what Socrates considers to be another form of *eros*—intellectual or philosophic *eros*. Souls, in order to know, must strip away the conventions which

cover their nature. Shame prevents them from doing this just as it prevents them from stripping their bodies. The comic poets, because of this shame, are able to ridicule what is natural and thus to discourage it. The comic poet is too much motivated by shame, for he is unaware of the kind of *eros* which justifies shamelessness. In other words, the comic poet will ridicule philosophy just as he will ridicule lasciviousness and do so because both conflict with conventional demands which are enforced by shame. This point is also made by Homer. When the angry Haephaestus binds his unfaithful wife Aphrodite together with her lover Ares and exposes them naked to the other gods, all but one are convulsed with laughter at the sight. But Hermes says that he would be willing to undergo such humiliation if he could lie with Aphrodite. Shame cannot induce his *eros* to forsake the pursuit of the beautiful and the good, even if all the goddesses were to join the gods in observing and laughing at him. Ultimately, from the Socratic point of view, Hermes is right.

According to Socrates, the institution of the same practices for women as men is possible because it is natural; and it is proved to be natural by arguing that the difference between men and women is no more important than the difference between bald men and men with hair. However, Socrates also admits that the best women are always inferior in capacity to the best men; it is then highly improbable that any women would even be considered for membership in the higher classes. Thus the whole consideration of their education as guardians is unnecessary. If the fact that women bear children is to be ignored and does not play a role in their selection as guardians, if ability is the only criterion, there will not be a sufficient number of women in the guardian class to reproduce it. It is evident that the women are placed among the guardians not because they possess the same capacities as the men, but precisely because they are different, because they can bear children and the men cannot. To treat dissimilar persons similarly is unjust and unnatural. Maybe the souls are the same, but the influence of the body is powerful; the necessity of the body makes justice to souls difficult. In order to legitimate treating the women in the same way as the men, Socrates must fabricate a convention about the nature of women.

Why then does Socrates insist on the same training for men and women? Women had hardly been mentioned in the first four books. Why not let the men run the city and leave the women at home? Two reasons may be suggested, one political, the other trans-political. In the first place, neglect of the virtue of women may be said to be another Spartan error. Men need women and can easily be controlled by them. The character of the women in a society has a great deal to do with the character of the men; for when the men are young, the women have a great deal to do with their rearing, and when they are older, they must please the women.

In particular, women have a more powerful attachment to the home and the children than do men. They are involved with the private things which are likely to oppose the city. They characteristically do not like to send their sons off to war. Further, women have much to do with men's desire to possess money. Women's favor can be won by gifts, and they have a taste for adornment and public display. Women play a great role in the corruption of regimes, as will be shown in Books VIII and IX. If half the city is not educated to the city's virtues, the city will not subsist. This is a city without homes, and the women have more to overcome if they are to accept it, for their natures lead them to love the private things most and draw the men to a similar love. They must share the men's tastes, or they will resist the changes in the family Socrates is about to propose.

In the second place, the exclusive maleness, so much connected with battle, is not the whole of human nature, although it may appear so to the men. The female represents gentleness, and the complete soul must embrace both principles. Pheidippides, in the *Clouds*, and Callicles, in the *Gorgias*, think of Socrates as unmanly, a pale-faced individual who sits around and gossips rather than engaging in the activities of real men. In the *Theaetetus* Socrates compares himself to a kind of woman, a midwife; and in the *Symposium* he recounts that he learned the secrets of his erotic science from a woman. Just as a city needs the female, so does the soul, but perhaps in a more fundamental way. Full humanity is a discrete mixture of masculinity and femininity. When talking about warrior-guardians the feminine could be forgotten; but this latest discussion is a harbinger of the philosopher-guardians.

Having successfully met the first wave—the same education and way of life for women as for men, Socrates and Glaucon prepare to face the second—the community of women and children. In the discussion of this proposal there is less emphasis on the comic element; the problems touched on here have been themes of tragedy—*Antigone* and *Oedipus* come most immediately to mind—as well as comedy. Socrates and Glaucon agree to postpone the question of the possibility of this institution—that is, according to the procedure they have adopted, the question of whether it is natural—in favor of first describing it and its advantages.

The sexual relations of the guardian and auxiliary classes are treated as though they exist only for the production of children for the city. An attempt is made to rationalize sexual desire in making it responsive to the command of the law. Attraction and love in themselves know no limits of propriety, exigency, law or country. They are most dangerous to a city because their power is such as to drown all other sentiments in their intensity, and they indicate an element of man which is by nature unpolitical. The sexual passion can be trained and repressed, but it is not usually thought possible to make it respond only to those objects chosen by the city,

in a way and at a time deemed fitting by the city. But here Socrates acts as though it were feasible, if not easy, to channel *eros* for the benefit of the city; otherwise it would have to be left private, repressed and exhorted, but always a somewhat hostile beast, even when asleep. Now the rulers must tell many lies. And these lies must be bigger ones than the noble lie. The noble lie is more easily believable than these lies will be, inasmuch as the former concerns the origins and, after a period of time, there will be no witnesses of those origins left to gainsay it; inclination will be a constant witness against the lies of the rulers in sexual matters. So Socrates invokes the gods. Marriages, he says, are sacred. But in this arrangement of things, marriage means nothing more than a temporary sexual relationship, for there are no private homes, no private children, and the citizens may be expected to have many such marriages. Socrates explains that the sacred is what is beneficial to the city. Appetizing and frequent sexual relations are to be the reward for excellence in public service; this will motivate the citizens to perform their responsibilities well and will insure that those who are of the greatest virtue will produce the most children. In order to make this system work, the rulers will have many concerns not shared by rulers in less perfect cities; these concerns could well be the subject of comedy in these other cities.

Just as erotic activity becomes a part of a man's public duty, so the offspring of the unions must become part of public property. The family is abolished, unless one considers the city as one family. The problem of Antigone cannot arise, for there can be no conflict between the family and the city. The intention of the noble lie is furthered: men are finally deprived of everything which they might love more than the city; all men are brothers. But the effect of this is to remove whatever is natural in the family and replace it with an entirely conventional base. A father, if he is anything, is the one who engenders the child. A father who did not do so would be a completely artificial entity, at best a substitute for the natural father. Law or convention must take the place of nature in order to insure the possibility of this city. Children are to transfer to the city what they would give to their parents. This, too, is completely unnatural. It is, however, not entirely without foundation in our understanding of human nature. If the family, which is surely somehow natural, remains the only object of loyalty, the clan or tribe can never be surpassed. To become either a member of a city—or a philosopher—one must break with one's primary loyalty. The bodily or blood ties are not the only thing that is natural to man; nor are they the most important thing. Men do not only love members of their family, but also those whom they believe to be good. Nevertheless, a man who loved the better children of others more than his own inferior children would be considered monstrous. The blood ties bind and have a morality of their own which keeps the mind from wandering freely over the world; they stand in the way of

natural fulfillment. Men are usually torn between duty to their own and duty to the good. The communism of women and children, by suppressing family ties, serves to emancipate men's love of the good.

If the family is to become the city, and the city is to be self-sufficient, the most sacred and awesome of prohibitions must be defied. There must be incest in this city. By law all members of the city are the closest of relatives, and they will not know their natural relatives. To most men nothing could seem more terrible than incest; so powerful is the prohibition against incest that it even removes desire where objects of satisfaction are closest at hand; it is accepted without question and hardly needs to be taught. The crime of Oedipus and his tragedy, the archetype of tragedy, concerns this prohibition. When asked about the problem, Socrates treats it as though he were speaking of regulations no more controversial than those concerning rivers and harbors. He thus justifies the accusation of Aristophanes: he is the enemy of the family and its fundamental principle. The particular crime of Oedipus is indeed prohibited here, but only because he and Jocasta would not be of the proper age for breeding. When Socrates says that in special instances, and if the Delphic oracle permits, brothers and sisters can wed, he understates the case. As Glaucon sees (463c), Socrates' prescriptions about the family actually mean that everybody in the city is closely related; there are no cousins; everyone is at least the brother or sister of everyone else. Examination of the marriage regulations would suggest that it is unlikely that even more serious breaches of the incest prohibition can be avoided in this city. The relationships in the entire city will be as tangled as those in the family of Oedipus. And Socrates asks for divine sanction for such incestuous loves. Given that there will be many erotic improprieties in this city—as Aristotle makes clear (*Politics* II, iv)-it seems that Socrates' approach to the matter is quite light-hearted.

What, then, is this radical policy meant to achieve? Socrates argues that the city will be one, and the demon of private, selfish interest will be exorcised. He compares the city to a body all parts of which share the same pleasures and pains. This city does not attain to that degree of unity, however, for one thing cannot be made public: the body. Everyone's body is his own. The minds could conceivably be made to think similar thoughts (a possibility not so obnoxious as it sounds; for minds contemplating the same truths are, for that moment and in that way, the same). But if a man stubs his toe, no other man can share his pain. Thus the unity of the city depends on that same forgetting of the body which has been a golden thread running through the whole discourse. The body is what stands in the way of devotion to the common good; it is the source of the desire and the need for privacy. The problem is that the body's demands lead to the establishment of an entire way of life and a set of beliefs contrary to those which would be most

conducive to the perfection of a man's soul or the pursuit of truth. The way of life based on the body is directed to acquisition of the means of preserving and gratifying the body. The set of beliefs which protects that way of life concerns private property, the family, the civil order, and even the gods. Although these beliefs only serve the selfish interests related to the body and do not express the truth about nature, they are enormously respectable. Men hold strongly to them, and it seems very important that they be maintained. These beliefs fetter men's minds; they are the conventions which veil nature.

Socrates is here trying to construct a political regime which is not dominated by such conventions, one in which philosophy does not have to be a private, hidden activity because it contradicts the authoritative prejudices. Aristophanes can help us to understand the character of these prejudices. In the *Clouds*, Strepsiades burns Socrates' dwelling when he discovers that Socrates had taught his son things which threaten the sanctity of the family. Only a man who did not care too much about the family would be prepared to tolerate Socrates' teaching. Socrates has elaborated a regime in which no citizen has a family and thus no one can be unreasonable in the name of the family. Socrates' demand that the city be unified is identical to the demand that the body and its extensions—property and the family—be perfectly mastered. If that mastery is impossible, so is the city. We would learn from this fact that philosophy is essentially a private activity and that the city must always be ruled by prejudices. Moreover, from the example of the city in speech, a man would learn what he must overcome in himself in order to become a philosopher. Socrates forgets the body in order to make clear its importance.

To put the matter more simply: only in a city such as Socrates and his companions have constructed will no obloquy be attached to Socrates' deplorable neglect of his family and his indifference to the labor necessary to making a comfortable living. This city, which is constructed in response to Aristophanes' charge that Socrates had to break the law in order to feed and clothe himself and in order to replenish his society of male companions, will take care of him, and his children will be talented youths of the kind he sought out in Athens. In all other cities Socrates must be morally suspect as a poor husband and father. Socrates has the strength to endure this opprobrium; if he were seriously concerned about it, he would fetter his mind in trying to avoid it. In the passage under consideration, then, we see the conditions of philosophy and what must be sacrificed to it. As yet the citizens of this city have no sufficient reason to make these sacrifices. But if philosophy is desirable, so are these efforts to conquer everything that attaches one to particularity. Socrates can contemplate going naked where others go clothed; he is not afraid of ridicule. He can also contemplate sexual intercourse where others are stricken with terror; he is not afraid of moral indignation. In other words, he

treats the comic seriously and the tragic lightly. He can smile where others cry and remain earnest where others laugh. In the *Symposium* he says that the true poet must be both tragedian and comedian, implying that the true poet is the philosopher. Here he shows that the man who has both gifts must use them to oppose the ways the vulgar tragic and comic poets use them; he must treat the tragic lightly and the comic seriously, hence reversing their usual roles. The man who is able to do this is already a philosopher. In both cases, it is shame which must be opposed; for shame is the wall built by convention which stands between the mind and the light. The ordinary poetry appeals to that shame, accepting its edicts as law, while philosophic poetry overcomes it. Shame, in both the case of nakedness and that of incest, is spiritedness' means of controlling *eros* for the sake of preservation and the city. The effect of that shame is pervasive and subtle, making the thinkable appear unthinkable. The mind requires heroic efforts in order to become aware of the distortions of its vision caused by shame and to overcome them.

Having discussed the community of women and children and its advantages, Socrates and Glaucon turn to the question of the possibility of this regime. But Socrates, who seems anxious to avoid this question, turns the discussion to the foreign relations of their completed city, particularly to the way in which it will fight wars. The changes within the city bring about changes in the character of inter-city relations. In this discussion, although Socrates provides some satisfactions to be derived from war for Glaucon's erotic and warlike temper, the general intention is to temper and humanize war. To this end, Socrates proposes a pan-Hellenic policy of hostility toward the barbarians. As the relations among the members of the city are to be like the relations among the members of a family, so the relations among the Greek cities are to become like the relations which prevail among the parties in a city and the relations between Greeks and non-Greeks are to become like the relations of Greek cities. Thus there is a general reduction of hostility along the line (without expectation that it can be done away with altogether), and even the barbarians profit from the change. In this way, all men are brought closer to one another by extending the sentiments connected with love of one's own to all of humanity: fellow citizens are to be brothers, Greeks are to be fellow citizens, and barbarians are to be Greeks. At this point Socrates accepts the Greek, or conventional, distinction between Greek and barbarian. One should not, however, assume that he is limited by this horizon; he is speaking to Glaucon who is subject to such limitations. Later, when Glaucon has learned more, Socrates asserts that this good city can be either Greek or barbarian. This discussion of the relation among cities mixes convention with nature in the intention of bringing men closer together and removing the obstacles which prevent the recognition of a common

humanity, without at the same time undermining the principles which make political life possible.

The eager Glaucon finally insists that Socrates must stop trying to avoid *the* question. Socrates must tell whether the regime is possible. Glaucon, however, no longer means by possible what had earlier been meant. He wants to know how the regime will come into being; he is interested only in its actualization. He thus abandons the standard which he set in his first speech about justice, that is, nature. What he wanted then was a proof that justice is good according to nature and not merely according to convention or human agreement; justice was to be shown to conduce to human happiness in the same way health does. This standard was maintained in the discussion of the desirability of assigning the same way of life to women as to men. By showing that women's natures are the same as men's and supporting this proof with examples of natural animal behavior, Glaucon and Socrates were satisfied that the proposal was possible and good. Now Glaucon only wants to know whether the city can exist without determining whether it is natural and hence good. At the end, he seems willing to accept the city and its justice without having found out that thing which he himself had insisted was decisive for accepting or rejecting the city. And it is clear that the community of women and children, if it were to exist, would not be a product of nature but of art; it would be a triumph of art over nature. Glaucon's desire to see his city come into being has caused him to forget to ask whether it is good for man or not. The lesson of this change in the meaning of possibility would seem to be that, though man exists by nature, the city does not and is hence of a lower status than man.

Socrates, in a preamble to his discussion of the possibility of the regime, contributes to the depreciation of the city which was just begun by abandoning the question of its naturalness. He makes it clear that this regime which is to be brought into being will not be simply just. Justice itself exists more in speech than deed. After all of this effort, the product is admitted to be imperfect and not lovable for itself but because it is an imitation of justice. At the peak of the insistence that everything be given to the city, it becomes manifest that no city deserves such attention and that one must look beyond the city for the reality. This is a great disappointment and prepares the way for a transcendence of the city.

(*473c–487a*) At last, however, Socrates allows the final wave—the philosopher-kings—to roll in on them, and he introduces his own way of life into the city. It is no wonder that he hesitated to speak, for he asserts:

> Unless the philosophers rule as kings or those now called kings and chiefs genuinely and adequately philosophize, and political power and philosophy coincide in the same place, while the many natures now making their way to either apart from the other are by necessity

> excluded, there is no rest from ills for the cities, my dear Glaucon, nor I think for human kind, nor will the regime we have now described in speech ever come forth from nature, insofar as possible, and see the light of the sun.

Socrates expects to be drowned in tides of ridicule for this paradoxical assertion. Glaucon wholeheartedly agrees that this will be the case, and anticipates that the scorn will be mixed with anger. The laughter and indignation, which played so important a role in the discussion of the first two waves, reappear together here in a more intense form.

It is, however, hard for modern men to be particularly shocked by Socrates' pronouncement; it seems much less comic or reprehensible to us than the other waves. It is not that we would take the notion very seriously, but we are in some sense the heirs and beneficiaries of Socrates' work, even as we are the children of the Enlightenment which radicalized that work. Partly because Socrates and Plato were so effective in arguing the usefulness of philosophy to civil society, and partly because the meaning of philosophy has changed, we no longer believe that there is a tension between philosophy and civil society. Although we might doubt whether philosophers have the gift of ruling, we do not consider the activity of philosophy to be pernicious to political concerns. Hence the notion of philosopher-kings is not in itself paradoxical for us. But, precisely because we take it for granted that the hatred of philosophy was merely prejudice, and that history has helped us to overcome that prejudice, we are in danger of missing the point which Socrates makes here. In order to understand this passage, we must see philosophy against the nonphilosophic and hostile background from which it emerged. It is not merely historical curiosity which should lead us to make this effort. We must rediscover the forgotten reasons for Socrates' difficulties in order to evaluate the role of philosophy and science within our world, for their role may be more problematic than we are wont to believe. Philosophy is a rare plant, one which has flourished only in the West; it is perhaps the essence of that West. Its place is not simply assured everywhere and always as is the city's. The writings of Plato and a few others made it respectable. The *Republic* thus represents one of the most decisive moments of our history. In this work Socrates presents the grounds of his being brought to trial and shows why philosophy is always in danger and always in need of a defense.

The best way to see the fantastic character of Socrates' proposal for the rule of philosopher-kings is to look at Aristophanes' *Clouds*, which shows how the philosopher appears to the city. Socrates stays in his think-tank discussing the nature of the heavens with unhealthy men. He is graceless and unprepossessing, a ridiculous personage in the eyes of any man of the world. His experiments in

natural philosophy allow him to be besmirched by lizards, and he spends his time looking at gnats, a thing no gentleman would do; these insects even infest his clothes. He does not believe in the gods of Athens and has other extraordinary divinities of his own; he draws promising young men away from the political life into his unusual researches. He is a marginal figure who seems both odd and corrupt, utterly without common sense. With this picture of himself in mind, Socrates seems to say here, "All right, this is the man who should rule." He is ridiculous in his pretensions and subversive in his intentions, thus provoking reactions of laughter and anger.

At this point in the discussion, Socrates argues that philosophy is needed in this city; he does not argue that philosophy is the best human activity. Philosophy is not the theme of the discussion, but justice, and particularly a just city. Nevertheless, the most comprehensive discussion of the city leads—against the will of Socrates, as it were—to a discussion of philosophy. Beginning from the common sense of political men and maintaining their perspective throughout, Socrates demonstrates that they must tolerate and encourage philosophy. This constitutes a defense of philosophy from the political point of view. Philosophy is necessary to this regime, to the best regime, because without philosophy the regime cannot find impartial rulers who have considered the proper distribution of the good things. In other words, the philosopher is the only kind of knower whose attention is devoted to the whole. Statesmen are always preoccupied with the here-and-now, but the interpretation of the here-and-now depends on some knowledge of the whole. If justice means giving each man what is fitting for him, a statesman must know what man is and his relation to the other beings.

In asserting that philosophers should rule, Socrates formulates a view of the relation between wisdom and power opposed to that of the Enlightenment. Beginning from the common assumption that knowledge of the ends of man and civil society is necessary to civil society, or that wisdom should rule, the two teachings differ as to whether the rule of wisdom requires that the wise rule. The thinkers of the Enlightenment teach that wisdom can rule without philosophers having to take political power; that is, they teach that the dissemination of knowledge will inevitably lead to the establishment of good regimes. Socrates teaches that wisdom and political power are distinct. Their coming together can only be due to the coincidence that a man who is wise happens also to be a ruler, thus uniting the two things; nothing in their two natures leads the one to the other. Political power serves the passions or desires of the members of a city, and a multitude cannot philosophize. It may use the results of science or philosophy, but it will use them to its own ends and will thereby distort them. Moreover, the wise man by himself is more of a threat to a regime than a helper. Intellectual progress is

not the same as political progress, and, because there is not a simple harmony between the works of the mind and the works of the city, the philosopher without power must remain in an uneasy relationship with the city and its beliefs. Enlightenment endangers philosophy because it tempts philosophers to sacrifice their quest for the truth in favor of attempting to edify the public; in an "enlightened" world, philosophy risks being made tool of unwise and even tyrannical regimes, thus giving those regimes the color of reason and losing its function as the standard for criticism of them. Enlightenment also endangers the city by publicly calling into question its untrue but essential beliefs. If philosophers cannot rule, philosophy must be disproportionate to the city. This means that its truths must remain fundamentally private, and that the philosopher, for his own good and that of the city, must hide himself. He must adapt his public teachings to his particular situation while keeping his thought free of its influence. The philosopher's public speech must be guided by prudence rather than love of the truth; his philosophic activity seems essentially private. Philosopher-kings are, therefore, truly a paradox. The formulation points up the salutary effect of philosophy in a city and the necessity of the city for philosophy, hence justifying each to the other; but the high degree of improbability of actualization of the *coincidence* of philosophers and kings also points up the enduring tension between philosophy and the city. The city cannot do without philosophy, but it also cannot quite tolerate philosophy.

Socrates expects a spirited attack on his position by his opponents, so he must prepare his defenses. He begins by distinguishing the philosophers from the nonphilosophers. This distinction is made by referring to two salient aspects of the philosopher. In the first place, he has a voracious appetite for all learning. His curiosity is not like that of a craftsman who learns only what is useful in the narrow sense and whose interest is limited by his craft. The philosopher learns as other men love—simply because it seems good and an end in itself; as a matter of fact, learning is an erotic activity for him. Love of learning is another expression of man's *eros*, of his longing for completeness. Such a man wants to know everything, aware that no part can be understood without being considered in relation to the whole. Socrates simply describes that rare but revealing phenomenon, the theoretical man, he who proves the possibility of disinterested knowledge. He is the man who can preserve his disinterestedness even in the difficult human questions which concern him most immediately, because he is more attracted by clarity than life, satisfaction of desire, or honor. The philosopher introduces to the city a dimension of reason that had not been discerned in the earlier discussion of it.

Glaucon objects that on the basis of this description of the philosopher, all the lovers of sights and hearing—particularly the lovers of the festivals where the poets

display their dramas—would have to be considered philosophers. In response to this objection, Socrates defines the second salient characteristic of the philosopher: he is a lover of the one *idea* of each thing and not the many things which participate in the *ideas*, of being and not becoming, of knowledge and not opinion. Thus Socrates introduces the teaching for which he is most renowned and which constitutes the most difficult part of his thought—the *ideas*. Here this teaching is presented to a young man who is not a philosopher in a context where it is not the primary concern. Hence the treatment of it is most inadequate, and the existence of the *ideas* is assumed rather than proved. Socrates only tries to satisfy Glaucon that the philosopher has concern for a reality other than that of most men. In so doing, Socrates appeals particularly to Glaucon's own experience with the beautiful things he loves so much. That experience shows Glaucon that all the beautiful things he knows are also in some ways ugly, and that what was once beautiful becomes ugly. These beautiful things seem to be understood to be beautiful in relation to some standard which is entirely beautiful, the approach to which makes them beautiful. That standard *is* beautiful, while the things which imitate it *are* and *are not* beautiful at the same time. Things which come into being and pass away *are* only to the extent that they partake of what does not come into being or pass away. The *ideas* are the permanent *ones* behind the changing *manys* to which we apply the same name. Thus they are the causes of the things seen and heard—causes not in the sense that they explain the coming-into-being of a particular thing but in the sense that they explain its character. The *idea* of man is the cause of a particular man's being a man rather than a collection of the elements to which he can be reduced. The *ideas*, then, are the justification of the philosophic life. If there are no permanent entities, if everything is in flux, there can be no knowledge. Knowledge, or science, requires universals of which the particulars are imperfect examples; as knowing beings we care only for the universals. The *ideas* give reality to the universals and hence make it possible to explain the fact that man possesses knowledge. The *ideas* are the being of things. They constitute an account of the first causes of things which also does justice to the observed heterogeneity of the visible universe, unlike earlier, pre-Socratic accounts of being which required the reduction of all things to a single kind of being—like the atoms—thus making the specific characters of those things unintelligible. This teaching provides those intelligible, diverse, permanent, universal beings which the mind seems to seek when it attempts to define or to explain. In undertaking to look for justice, Socrates and his companions were looking for something real, which has a higher dignity than, and can act as a standard for, the imperfect justice which they found in men and cities. If there is not something like an *idea* of justice, their quest is futile.

And it is in this quest for the universal principles that the theoretical man first meets the opposition of the unphilosophic men who make up a city. They are loyal not to cities in general but to their own city; they love not men in general, but this particular man or woman; they are not interested in the nature of the species, but their own fates. However, all the things to which citizens are most passionately attached have a lessened reality in the eyes of the theoretical man; what is peculiar to these things, what constitutes their charm for the practical man, must be overcome in order to understand them. For the practical man the particular things to which he is attached are the real things, and he will resist any attempt to go beyond them to "the more general case," which would destroy their character and his capacity to possess them as his very own. The city in speech of the philosopher comes into being only by depreciating Athens, and any other city in which men can live. To the philosopher the city in speech is more lovable and more real than any of the particular cities which are to him poor imitations of the city in speech. In order to love what *is*, he must be a man who does not have the same needs as other men; he must have overcome, at least in thought, his own becoming. For the theoretical man, particular things are real only insofar as they "participate" in the *ideas*. They *are* not but are like what *is*. Hence the practical men who love particular things make the mistake of taking a thing to *be* that which it is like. They thus dream their lives away, never laying hold of a reality. But they cannot be told this. They must be soothed and deceived, and it is questionable how far they can afford to be tolerant of the philosopher whose interests are so different and conflicting.

Here, again, poetry seems to be in the service of the characteristic weakness of the many. Thus, in mentioning the unphilosophic men who are like the philosophers, Glaucon chooses the example of those who love theatrical spectacles. Poetry itself deals in images of particular things; and it uses its images to give added significance to one's particular attachments, beautifying one's country, one's loves, one's aspirations. In the beginning of the discussion Thrasymachus, the rhetorician, was refuted because he made the error of saying that a thing is that which it is like. And the discussion of imitation in Book III addressed this same question. It is a theme which runs throughout the *Republic*. Poetry, in its most common usage, adorns the particular and renders it more attractive, hence making it more difficult to transcend. It does so because it must appeal to audiences of men who cannot and do not wish to make that transcendence. It is thus an opponent of philosophy.

Glaucon agrees that philosophers, since they are awake while others are dreaming and are like painters who can use the truth as their model, would be the best rulers *if* they possessed the other virtues. Socrates responds to the doubt implied in Glaucon's condition by attempting to show that all the virtues are involved in the philosophers' very vocation and that thus they are good citizens. As

a result of their love of wisdom, all the lovers of wisdom possess all the virtues, and more reliably than anyone else because they have a sufficient reason for being virtuous. They do not have to make an effort to become virtuous or concentrate on the virtues; the virtues follow of themselves from the greatest love and pleasure of the philosophers. In the case of other men, as Adeimantus has made clear, everything they love has to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue. By way of contrast, without sacrifice the philosopher, in addition to possessing the intellectual virtues, will be moderate, courageous, and just. At last there appears to be a resolution of the disharmony between happiness and devotion to the city that arose after the destruction of the city of sows. For the philosophers constitute a class of men who can safely be made rulers and whose happiness is identical with their virtuous activity.

However, this solution may be more apparent than real, for it is questionable whether the virtues of the philosopher are quite the same as those of the citizen. One has only to consider the case of the philosopher's love of truth, which Socrates assimilates to the warriors' truthfulness. It is obvious that a man can love the truth without telling it and can also regularly tell what he understands to be the truth without any love for or questing after the real truth. Similarly, the philosopher's courage and moderation are not the same as those of the simple citizen. The philosopher is courageous because his constant preoccupation with the eternal makes him somewhat oblivious to life, and not because he is obedient to the city's rules about what is fearful and what not. And he is moderate because he has an immoderate love of the truth, not because he restrains his desires. Most important of all, Socrates indicates that the philosopher is just only by showing that there are certain kinds of things he is likely to abstain from. This is the same procedure Socrates adopted in Book IV when he tried to prove that a man with a healthy soul will be just, and he admitted there that this is only a crude test. Thus the philosopher is likely to be indifferent to money because it plays only a small role in helping him acquire what he cares for, but there is nothing here that indicates he has a disposition to render unto others what is due to them. Moreover, there is also nothing in his nature which would attach him to the city. Socrates hints at this by repeating a catalogue of the philosopher's virtues several times; the virtues listed change slightly in the course of these repetitions. The most significant change is that justice is finally omitted (cf. 487a and 494b). The silent lesson would seem to be that it is indeed possible to possess intellectual virtue without what later came to be called moral virtue.

The problem appears to be something like the following. As presented in the *Republic*, the virtues can be derived from two possible sources: the necessities of the city and the necessities of philosophy. The virtues stemming from these two

sources have much in common, but they are far from identical. Nonetheless, Socrates' procedure is to identify the two and thus to assert that the philosopher is identical with the virtuous man in the civic sense. In the very act of making this questionable identification, however, he helps us to see the distinction between the two. It is a new way of stating the already familiar tension between the needs of the body and those of the soul. The virtues connected with the city help to preserve the city and thereby its inhabitants; preservation, or mere life, is the goal. The virtues connected with philosophy aid in the quest for the comprehensive truth; the good life is the goal. Both goals make their demands, and those demands conflict. There are, then, two kinds of virtue: philosophic virtue and demotic, or vulgar, virtue.

Moreover, in both instances, virtue is loved not for virtue's sake but for some other good beyond it; or, to use Kantian language, the system of the virtues presented by Socrates is heteronomous. What Glaucon had asked for is a proof that justice is good in itself. The implicit Socratic teaching is that no such proof is possible, that nature does not give a ground for a virtue not connected with some other end. He differs from the utilitarians only in that the needs of the body do not constitute the only end. In Socratic thought, the demands of philosophy, or of the soul, provide a second polar star for the guidance of human conduct. This tempers the unmitigated pursuit of the goods connected with the body and the city which characterizes the tradition begun by Machiavelli and Hobbes; and it adds a sublimity to the account of the virtues which is also lacking in the later thought. Still, this leaves the virtues of the warrior class in a kind of limbo. They are asked to live and die for the city. They are asked to have more virtues than their self-preservation would demand, yet they are not philosophers. What, then, is the status of their virtues? Socrates seems to deny the existence of the independent moral virtues. These are the virtues presented by Aristotle as ends in themselves, pursued only because they are noble. Socrates presents instead two kinds of virtues, one low and one high, but both mercenary in the sense that they are pursued for the sake of some reward. The warrior's virtue is somewhere between them. Virtue, if pursued for other reasons, is no longer what we mean by true virtue; the great tradition stretching from Aristotle to Kant is evidence for that. But virtue pursued for its own sake is without ground and has a tincture of folly. This is the Socratic teaching. Moral virtue is a halfway house, partaking of the *grandeur et misère* of its two sources.

(*487b–503b*) Adeimantus, sensing the inadequacy of this proof of the philosopher's public virtue and comparing it with the experience of the cities, for the fourth and last time stops Socrates in the name of the city. Once more, his interruption takes the form of an accusation, but an accusation no longer directed

against certain political proposals but rather against the philosophers themselves, against the true source of the difficulties. According to Adeimantus, philosophers mislead men by their superior power of speech, making the weaker argument appear the stronger; at best they are useless to the city, at worst, and most usually, they are completely vicious. Of all men, their dedication to the city appears to be most questionable. Philosophy always has a bad reputation, and it becomes Socrates' duty to show that its ill-repute is the fault of those who hate it rather than of its practitioners. In the performance of that duty, he will also prove to Glaucon that philosophy is one thing that a man would want to pursue even if it brings him a bad reputation or the reputation for injustice. If philosophy is the health of the soul, and hence justice in the highest sense, justice is desirable in itself, regardless of reputation. This is the praise of justice Glaucon asked for in the beginning.

The explanation of philosophy's plight is divided into three parts: the true philosophers are misunderstood and neglected, the potential philosophers are corrupted, and impostors have taken on the guise of philosophers. Philosophy is exculpated and is useful to the city if properly used. The appeal is directed to the people as a whole, whom Adeimantus seems to represent. The people's hostility is explained as a result of misunderstanding and the deceptions of vicious men. The people are represented as persuadable because they are decent, and there are no real conflicts of interest. This gentleness of the people is a necessary condition of the actualization of the good city and is therefore somewhat overstated in an account which tries to show that a city will accept philosophers as kings.

Socrates begins his *apology* with an image, the first of several that are to come. These images constitute a kind of Socratic poetry and serve to counterbalance the powerful attack Socrates has made on poetry. Just as we learned that the poets know the human passions, here we learn that they are in possession of one of the most powerful tools for leading men to the truth. The intellect does not perceive the *ideas* directly; it knows of their existence only through particulars. Man must reason about the things he perceives in order to know their causes. Without a full and profound experience of the phenomena, the intellect is a void. Images are the food of the mind; and poetry can make the most fruitful images. In poetry one can find representations of man which are richer and more typical than any experiences of men that one is likely to have. The poetic images should be used as geometers use representations of circles—to understand something of which the particular circle is only an imperfect image. Poetry characteristically causes men to forget that its images are only images, that is, like the circle drawn in the sand which is not *the* circle; but it need not always be abused in this way. The image Socrates presents to Adeimantus has a double function: it tells him a lovely tale which charms him into a more favorable disposition toward philosophy; and it causes him to think about the

meaning of the image. Adeimantus must see how the image applies to philosophy as he knows it, and in what respects the image differs from the reality it indicates. Thus he is beginning to think about philosophy, and in a way he is philosophizing.

In Socrates' image, the city is compared to a ship which belongs to the people, who are compared to a big and strong shipowner who is also somewhat deaf, short of vision, and ignorant of navigation. Incapable of running the ship himself, the owner turns it over to sailors who are more preoccupied with securing the positions of power than they are with the art of sailing. They should be subordinate to a pilot, but the mechanics of the struggle for power become an art that is treated as an end in itself. The true pilot is not interested in fighting for his proper position and is excluded. In this image, the sailors are akin to the warrior class without rulers; the chiefs of that class remain preoccupied with the human world, unaware that a good sailing requires knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, that is, of the *cosmos* as a whole. This knowledge appears irrelevant to their concerns, and the true pilot is ridiculed. The philosopher, who, contrary to the indications of the *Apology*, must know nature, and particularly the nature of the heavens, is as necessary to the city as a pilot is to a ship. He is merely misunderstood, and the people are misled. His knowledge is not described here as something desirable in itself for him, but it is acquired for the sake of the city; it is like the pilot's or the doctor's art. He is ready and fit to serve if only the ship's owner can perceive how necessary he is. The philosopher's situation might well be compared to that of Gulliver in Lilliput. He is too big and too different to be trusted, too much beyond the temptations of the small ambitious men to be their tool; but if the Lilliputians could have maintained their faith in him, they would have both profited and become more just. This explanation of the philosopher's lack of reputation also serves as a defense against the accusation that he pries into the secrets of the heavens and Hades, not by denying that he does but by insisting on the value to the city of his doing so.

After having by means of the image disposed of the objection that the philosopher is useless to the city, Socrates turns to the explanation of why gifted young men turn away from philosophy. According to Socrates, their talents make them able to succeed at anything; healthy young people usually try to excel at what is most respectable within their community. The honors given by the city attract the potential philosophers to political life. Because these young men seem to have great political futures, corrupt and ambitious statesmen hope to make use of them, promising them all sorts of advantages if they are willing to adopt the current practices of the city. It is not, as is often said, the sophists who corrupt the young. The sophists, Socrates says, are harmless men who are only servants of the city's passions. The true sophist, the true educator, is the public assembly—the sovereign body of the people; it forms the tastes of the young by its thunderous expressions of

approval and disapproval. It is almost impossible for a noble youth to resist the city's praise and blame and the prospects it offers him. The man who undertakes to teach the truth to such a youth faces many difficulties. The youth himself is disinclined to renounce the charms which draw him. And, if the teacher succeeds in influencing him, the unruly sailors will persecute the teacher who is robbing them of a great prop of their power. First the teacher will be intimidated by threats; finally he will be brought to trial and condemned to death as a corruptor of the youth. All he was trying to do was teach the true politics which would enable the young man to do good for the city while punishing its deceivers. Such a teacher, to be sure, takes his pupil away from the immediate and most visible concerns of the people, but his intention is to provide the people with the kind of men they would pray to have as rulers. Socrates claims that men such as himself do not corrupt the youth but try to save them from corruption.

By thus showing that those who could be genuine philosophers abandon the practice of philosophy, Socrates tries to explain away the fact that some philosophers seem vicious by claiming that they are impostors. Incomplete, little men move into the positions left free by the corruption of those who might truly have filled them. Such impostors are motivated by vanity, and they are less interested in being wise than in being reputed wise and in winning arguments. Willing to make the worse argument appear the stronger, they are the source of the accusation that the philosophers are teachers of rhetoric. In this terrible situation, the true philosophers are isolated, defenseless, and unable to help the city. For their own preservation they therefore reluctantly withdraw into private life, though their real vocation is ruling.

These arguments in defense of philosophy are directed to soothing the people's anger and apprehension. They show how Socrates believes the people must be talked to. They must, above all, be shown that he is a good citizen, even though he may appear useless or even vicious. Thus he insists that these appearances are the result of a fatal misunderstanding. He is truly the people's friend; he appeals to them over the heads of their rulers. He responds to the great accusations against him—that he is a meddler in things in the heavens and below the earth, a corruptor of the youth, and a deceiver. However, he is silent about the charge of atheism.

Having argued that the charges against philosophy are unjust, Socrates now proceeds to suggest that the people could accept the rule of philosophers. It is altogether a difficult business to bring city and philosopher together, but in these passages the problem appears principally to be to persuade the people to overcome their anger. And Socrates' defense seems to persuade at least one man who is vitally connected with the people—Thrasymachus. In any event Socrates now announces that Thrasymachus has just become his friend. Perhaps this is because

Thrasymachus now believes that Socrates is no longer a threat to the city; perhaps it is because he now sees that his rhetoric has a place in Socrates' enterprise for which philosophy alone does not suffice. Socrates has tamed the lion and can now use him in the taming of the people. And Socrates, with Thrasymachus' help, will succeed in doing in the dream of the *Republic* what he could not do in the real situation of the *Apology*. If he cannot persuade the people directly, perhaps his philosophic rhetoric, which we see in the course of this dialogue, can persuade the political rhetorician who will in turn persuade the people. The problem is to overcome the people's moral indignation at what appears to be a threat to their own. Socrates insists that the people will ultimately be gentle; but in doing so, he mentions so many obstacles which stand in the way of that gentleness that he undermines his case. He argues that there is a possibility that the people will not be angered by an attempt to transform their lives and put them under the absolute rule of philosophers who will take their property away. His arguments only serve to underline the great improbability, not to say impossibility, of the consummation of the project.

(*503b–540c*) Socrates, however, takes it as proven that the city, which cannot philosophize, will accept philosophy, and he now turns to the problem of training the philosophers. But this means that he must treat of philosophy itself and no longer of philosophy as it affects the city. As a result, a whole new world of incredible beauty emerges; Glaucon and Adeimantus are shown an unexpected realm, from the standpoint of which everything looks different. If the *Republic* can be understood as a gradual ascent, we have reached the peak. Now everything must be accomplished by means of images, for Socrates' students have no personal experience of philosophy, but they must respect it in order to have the proper perspective on the whole political question. Socrates introduces the new theme when he tells Adeimantus that the study of justice, far from being the most important subject, is worthless unless it is completed by another. The true science, to which the others are only ministerial, is the study of the good. This comes as a surprise to Adeimantus, who is totally devoted to the city. It is a step beyond the earlier recognition that the *idea* of justice transcends any possible city. In turn, the *idea* of justice is only one of many *ideas*, which are treated in the comprehensive study of the good.

Glaucon insists that Socrates tell more of the *idea* of the good, and again takes his brother's place in the discussion. He was the first to ask for an account of justice in terms of the good, and his eroticism impels him to possess the good things. Socrates formulates his account of the good in such a way as to appeal to Glaucon's interest and passion. Glaucon is informed of a good which makes questionable all

the good things of which he spoke in his original attack on justice, and the attainment of which requires a way of life very different from the tyrant's way of life. Socrates leads Glaucon toward the apprehension of the good by means of the things which Glaucon knows and of which he has already spoken. He agrees that all action is directed toward the attainment of some good and that none of the things he desires is unambiguously good. There are many good things, but none of them are *the* good. The discussion at the end of Book V concluded that where there is a *many* to which we give a name, there must also be a *one* which is the cause of the particulars that constitute that many, which *is* the thing in itself without qualification. Hence there must be a good in itself, an *idea* of the good in which the good things participate. A man does not desire those things, but desires the good, which is somehow in them but *is* not them. The good, however, must also be a super *idea*, an *idea* of *ideas*, for the other *ideas*, for example, justice, man, beauty, are also good. Therefore these other ideas, the many *ideas*, are participations in the one *idea* of the good. Since the *ideas are*, the good, then, is the source of being, but beyond being, in the sense that it exists in a way different from the other beings. The good is the transcendent principle of the whole, the cause of the being of things and of the apprehension of being, uniting knower and known, the lover of the good and the good things. As experienced by man, the good is an overpowering combination of pleasure and knowledge.

Socrates tells Glaucon that an account of the good cannot be given to him, because he, Socrates, is incapable of giving it and Glaucon is incapable of understanding it. But he agrees to give him an account of the offspring of the good, the sun. The sun is the cause both of things being seeable and their being seen, and is also the cause of the existence of living things. What the sun is in the visible world, the good is in the intelligible world. On the basis of what we know of the visible world with its sun, we can conjecture about the intelligible world with its *idea* of the good. This Socrates does by drawing the divided line which describes the being of things and the faculties which apprehend them. It shows that reality extends far beyond anything the practical man ever dreams and that to know it one must use faculties never recognized by the practical man. The divided line is a sketch of a *cosmos* which can give ground to the aspirations of the philosophic soul. The splendor of this vision is meant to dazzle the mind's eye as the sun dazzles the body's eye. The erotic Glaucon is told that *eros* is the soul's longing for completeness, to be full of being, to know everything which *is*. Philosophy, which was introduced as a means to actualize the city's good and is being used as a means to discover *the* good, turns out to be the end, the human good.

After initiating Glaucon into the mysteries of this divine beauty, Socrates turns to an elaboration of the relationship of the philosophic soul to the city. The divided

line described the soul's progress from its lowest level of cognition, imagination, to trust, thought, and finally intellection, its highest level. But now Socrates makes clear that this is not a simple movement depending only on talent and effort. There are powerful forces that stand in the way of the philosophic quest. The discovery of that quest has the character of a liberation from bondage. In the most moving of all his many images, Socrates compares our situation to that of prisoners in a cave. We are surrounded by darkness, our only access to ourselves and the world coming from the observation of shadows on the wall. But, although there is darkness, there is also a light in the cave; the pale shadows we possess are made possible by that light. Moreover, a few human beings can emerge from the cave. Our lives are a combination of ugliness and sublime possibility. The Enlightenment, taken literally, believed that the light could be brought into the cave and the shadows dispelled; men, in that view, could live in perfect light. This Socrates denies; the philosopher does not bring light to the cave, he escapes into the light and can lead a few to it; he is a guide, not a torchbearer. The attempt to illuminate the cave is self-defeating: a part of man craves the shadows. The light would be dimmed and distorted; it would not provide real clarity within the cave. And, at the same time, those who have the urge to ascend to the light would be discouraged from the endeavor by the myth, apparently based on reason, that there is no other light to which they can ascend. Thus the only source of liberation and inspiration would disappear from the cave. The Enlightenment teaches that the cave can be transformed; Socrates teaches that it must be transcended and that this transcendence can be accomplished only by a few.

Only by constant reference back to the divided line can one understand the cave. In what sense does the cave represent the human situation with respect to education? The prisoners are said to be in bonds and forced to look at images of images—shadows on the wall of the cave. The lowest level of the line belongs to shadows and reflections, and the faculty which apprehends them is called imagination. This is the level of distorted and unclear images, and the faculty related to them is completely unreliable. To judge of images one must compare them to the things of which they are images. These latter are the things of which we have a natural consciousness—plants, animals, artifacts; etc.—the various *manys* of which we become aware through the senses. The faculty which apprehends them may be called trust, and it is the beginning point of knowledge We do not have sufficient knowledge of these things, nor can we explain how we know of them or how we are sure of their existence, but they are our entry into reality, the hints which lead us toward the causes or the *ideas*; the higher levels of the line are devoted to the explanation of these phenomena. Our awareness of them is not perfectly sure, but a universal doubt of them would lead us into a void; it would

leave us with nothing. It is called trust precisely because it resists doubt of the existence of what it apprehends. Knowledge or philosophy is the clarification and articulation of this natural consciousness. Imagination is no beginning point for knowledge because it cannot distinguish between what is merely a shadow, a distortion caused by the idiosyncrasies of our mental vision or those of the reflecting medium, and what is an accurate reflection of the objects. Only the awareness that an image is an image makes it possible to judge its true character, and in order to have that awareness imagination must be aided by the faculty of trust.

But who regularly believes that images are real things; who mistakes reflections for what is reflected? Why does Socrates insist that our situation is that of men who mistake images for realities? It would seem more sensible to say that we take objects too seriously, that we do not recognize the importance and superior reality of the causes or first principles. How can it be said that we are bound to the lowest level of the line? The answer seems to be that the cave is the city and that our attachment to the city binds us to certain authoritative opinions about things. We do not see men as they are but as they are represented to us by legislators and poets. A Greek sees things differently from the way a Persian sees them. One need only think of the question of nakedness as discussed in Book V, or the significance of cows to Hindus as opposed to other men, to realize how powerful are the various horizons constituted by law or convention. Legislators and poets are the makers of these horizons; or, to use the symbols of the cave image, they are the men who carry the statues and the other things the reflections of which the prisoners see. These objects are not natural; they are themselves images of natural objects produced with cunning art so as to look like their originals, but are adapted to serve the special interests of the artists. In other words, we do not see things directly, but through the opinions we are taught about them. Those opinions are not accurate reflections of nature but are adapted to serve the needs of the city. They are designed to make a man love his city, and therefore they have to invest the city with all sorts of special significance and have no basis in nature. The theoretical man would not believe such opinions and would, as theoretical man, have no particular concern for them or, therefore, for the city they defend. But the citizens' world is always a mixture of nature and convention, and that is the world of all of us. The first and most difficult of tasks is the separation of what exists by nature from what is merely made by man. The pictures on the wall of our cave look very real, and the two sources of the representations are artfully intertwined. We are attached to the illusion because it constitutes our own world and gives meaning to our particular existence.

Philosophy or science is concerned only with man or the city, not with this particular man or this particular city. Few men—and no cities—can live with this perspective. Socrates illustrates this in the account of his beliefs and practices given by Xenophon (*Memorabilia*, I, i). He was in the habit of telling his friends that art or science could teach a man how to sow a field well or how to build a house well, but it cannot tell him whether he will reap what he has sown or live in what he has built. Science is indifferent to the fate of individuals. Those for whom this is intolerable need a supplement to reason; they must turn to the Delphic oracle, to the divine, in order to satisfy themselves. Thus our love of our own ties us to the cave, and that powerful passion must be overcome in order to move upward on the line of knowledge. And he who does must leave his kin, be regarded as a traitor by them, forego the rewards offered to the man who joins in their self-deception, and run the risks of punishment prescribed by their laws. These are the bonds which tie us to the cave and its images. To break them requires rare passion and courage, for the lion in our souls, spiritedness, guards the gates of the dungeon.

The divided line and the cave teach that there are two fatal temptations of the mind. The first is that of the men who insist on the significance of the images in the cave and constitute themselves as their defenders and hence the accusers of the philosophers. They are often men of very high intelligence who are forced to hate reason by their unwillingness to renounce the charm and significance of their particular experiences and those of their people. They are enemies of whatever leads in the direction of universality, of anything that would tend to break down the heterogeneity, the particularity and distinctiveness, of the ways to which they are attached. Their dominant trait is piety, which frequently turns into fanaticism. These men are among the leaders of peoples and are protectors of the people's beliefs. This account of their nature acts as a corrective of the view that the people can easily be persuaded to accept philosophers as kings.

The other great temptation is that of those who are too easily liberated and do not learn in the cave what must be learned about man and the soul. These men dwell on the third level of the line and are best represented by the mathematicians. They escape to a world of universality and are charmed by the competence of their reason to order and explain that world. The homogeneity of numbers which can apply to all things permits them to reduce all the particularities in the world to unities. They tend to forget the questionableness of their own beginnings or principles and the natural heterogeneity of the different kinds of things; they are forgetful of qualitative differences and, hence, of the *ideas*. As the pious men were hostile to the *ideas* because the *ideas* threatened the heterogeneity of their world, these competent men are hostile to the *ideas* because they threaten the homogeneity of their world. Such were the early philosophers who while watching the sky fell

into holes, the men ridiculed by Aristophanes because their science could not understand man, the only being who understands. These two temptations are aided by two of man's most noble arts: poetry and mathematics. Both of these arts are necessary and useful, but both tend to emancipate themselves from philosophy and re-enforce the hostility to it. In order to resist these temptations, a man's reason must be both daring and moderate. Socrates, in his reform of philosophy, showed the way in which these virtues must be combined. A man must be daring in his quest for the first causes of all things and in his refusal to accept the sacred opinions of the cave. But he must be moderate and not look directly at the sun for fear of being blinded and losing the distinctions among the various kinds of things. He must look at the reflection of the sun and the things it illuminates; that is, he must not try to apprehend being directly but must try to discern it in the opinions about the various kinds of beings. Dialectic, the art of friendly conversation, as practiced by Socrates, is this combination of daring and moderation.

In the account of the cave given here, a man is liberated from his bonds not by his own efforts but by a teacher who compels him to turn to the light. The actual mode of this turning is represented in the action of the *Republic*. Old Cephalus has opinions about justice; in the investigation of justice, one does not begin by trying to look at justice, or by constructing definitions, but by examining these opinions about it. Cephalus holds two contradictory opinions about justice, but both seem necessary for his understanding of justice. One is thus forced to seek for another and more adequate opinion which can comprehend the phenomena covered by the contradictory opinions. The thoughtful observer recognizes that the opinions of the men in the cave are self-contradictory and thus meaningless as they stand. But their very contradiction points beyond them to more intelligible opinions and to objects which do not admit of such ambiguity. The many contradictory opinions are solicited by the one, comprehensive, opinion. Dialectic, beginning from the commonly held opinions, will lead to an ultimate agreement. It is this activity which can guide us to the discovery of the natural objects, and it implies that we begin from the phenomena as we see them, taking them seriously in an effort to clarify them. It is only by way of our imprisonment that a liberation can be effected; and our speech about things, if properly examined, is the reflection of the light in the cave.

The liberation, once effected, results in great happiness; the soul carries on its proper activity with its proper objects. And, as a result, the freed man has a great contempt for the cave, its shadows and its inhabitants. He wants always to live out in the light; the others do not know they are slaves, so they are content; but he knows it and cannot bear to live among them. Nothing in the city contributes to his specific pleasures, and he wants nothing from it; he is not, as are all others, a

potential exploiter of the city. At last the problem of finding disinterested rulers is solved. But it also becomes clear that the philosophers do not want to be rulers and that they must be compelled. Compulsion is necessary since rhetoric could not deceive philosophers. Now the tables are turned. Previously it appeared that the philosophers are anxious to rule and must persuade a recalcitrant populace. In the investigation of the philosophic nature it has by accident, as it were, emerged that philosophers want nothing from the city and that their contemplative activity is perfectly engrossing, leaving neither time nor interest for ruling. So, if philosophers are to rule, it must be the city that forces them to do so; and it is in the philosophers' interest to keep the knowledge of their kingly skills from the people. It is a perfect circle. The people must be persuaded to accept the philosophers; but the philosophers must be compelled to persuade the people to compel them to rule. And who would do that? This is not an accidental difficulty of communication between the two sides; it is grounded on real conflicts of interest.

Glaucon objects to the injustice of forcing the philosophers to return to the cave. This is injustice in the fullest sense of the word: it would be contrary to their good to return. Or to put it into the formula for justice: the city would force one man to do two jobs, to be both philosopher and king. It has become perfectly manifest that the life of reason, contrary to the political view stated in Book IV, has a character of its own far different from the calculation of the practical man. The activity of a king is not the same as that of a philosopher. It is at this point in the elaboration of the good city that we see that it cannot fulfill its intention and is hence a failure. The attempt was to found a city in which every member's duty was identical to his self-interest, in which total dedication was possible, in which the universal demands of justice did not undermine the laws of the city, and in which there was no claim that went beyond the city limits. This was to be a city without limits. But now it is evident that in the decisive respect the city is not natural: it cannot comprehend the highest activity of man. We modern men are accustomed to insist that almost every claim against civil society is valid, but Socrates denies this. There is only one claim the dignity of which is greater than that of the city; only at this point do the limits of the city become clear.

In the light of the splendor of the soul's yearning after the whole, the city looks very ugly. This is the true comedy—taking the city with infinite seriousness, beautifying it with every artifice, making it a veritable Callipolis, and then finding that compared to the soul which was supposed to be like it, it is a thing to be despised. This fair city, the goal of so many aspirations, now looks like a cave, and its happy citizens like prisoners; it is comparable to the Hades of which Achilles complained, and the attachment to it is a species of folly. From the point of view of the city, the philosopher looks ridiculous; but from the point of view of the whole,

the citizen looks ridiculous. Socrates asks which of the two contexts is the more authoritative. Aristophanes' comedy is the human comedy, Socrates' the divine.

Only the philosophers can provide the city with an end that can direct its actions. The ordinary statesmen serve the city and seek to provide for its preservation, which is only a condition of action, not an end. Only knowledge seems to have the character of an end in itself. But the philosopher has nothing to do with the city. The practical virtues can only be justified if they are understood to be the means to the theoretical virtues. But the city cannot consider itself a means to philosophy. This union of philosophy and the city is a shotgun wedding. The citizens would not be slaves to the philosophers' well-being, considering themselves means to an end in which they do not partake; and the philosopher, although he too needs preservation, can arrange that in less burdensome fashion than ruling.

This disproportion between city and philosophy becomes ever more evident during the presentation of the philosophic education. Glaucon and Socrates agree that the studies must serve war and thought because these are two essential activities of kings who are philosophers. But in the course of the discussion the politically relevant content of the studies progressively decreases, and finally they are forced to abandon the notion that philosophic studies have anything to do with action in the city. Socrates even reproaches Glaucon with hindering and distorting the philosophic education by his practical concern, on which he himself had previously insisted. Now the only justification of the higher learning is philosophy.

Socrates has proved in the course of the dialogue that all cities need the rule of wisdom and that wisdom means knowledge of the true whole or the first causes. He has shown that only the philosopher is concerned with such knowledge and hence is potentially the only true ruler. But he has not shown that such knowledge is possible, that any man can actually convert himself from a lover of wisdom into a wise man by knowing everything there is to know. This is also a condition of the city's possibility. Just as Socrates has overstated the case for the possibility of the city's accepting wisdom, he overstates the case for the possibility of a man's becoming wise. He seems to say that the philosophers will complete their labors and come to know the *idea* of the good. But it is doubtful whether the mind's eye can look directly at the good without being dazzled any more than the body's eye can look directly at the sun without being dazzled. Philosophy, as Socrates usually teaches, has the character of an unfinished and unfinishable quest. If this is true, it means that the philosopher cannot rule because he does not know what he would need to know in order to rule. He is the good citizen because he is seeking to acquire what the city most needs, but he has not yet succeeded in acquiring it, so that both he and the city are incomplete. Further, the philosopher has less time to rule than would a wise man, because his urgent business is unfinished. Both the

philosopher's ignorance and his lack of available free time caused by that ignorance militate against his being able to rule.

The final condition for the actualization of the best regime is that those who have compelled the philosophers to become kings must abandon their city, lands, and children, leaving no one over ten years of age in the city, so that an entirely new formation of the soul can be given to the children. Socrates blandly announces this condition as though the renunciation of all they live for by the whole citizen body were easy to accomplish. And it would have to be a voluntary renunciation because the philosophers have not yet educated a defense force with which to compel the people. The perfect city is revealed to be a perfect impossibility.

What then was the use of spending so much time and effort on a city that is impossible? Precisely to show its impossibility. This was not just any city, but one constructed to meet all the demands of justice. Its impossibility demonstrates the impossibility of the actualization of a just regime and hence moderates the moral indignation a man might experience at the sight of less-than-perfect regimes. The extreme spirit of reform or revolution loses its ground if its end is questionable. If the infinite longing for justice on earth is merely a dream or a prayer, the shedding of blood in its name turns from idealism into criminality. The revolutions of Communism or Fascism are made in the name of perfect regimes which are to be their consequence. What matter if a few million die now, if one is sure that countless generations of mankind will enjoy the fruits of justice? Socrates thinks about the end which is ultimately aimed at by all reformers or revolutionaries but to which they do not pay sufficient attention. He shows what a regime would have to be in order to be just and why such a regime is impossible. Regimes can be improved but not perfected; injustice will always remain. The proper spirit of reform, then, is moderation. Socrates constructs his utopia to point up the dangers of what we would call utopianism; as such it is the greatest critique of political idealism ever written. The *Republic* serves to moderate the extreme passion for political justice by showing the limits of what can be demanded and expected of the city; and, at the same time, it shows the direction in which the immoderate desires can be meaningfully channeled. At the beginning of the dialogue, Glaucon and Adeimantus set the severest standards for political justice. In order to try to meet those standards, they would have to establish a terrible tyranny and would fail nevertheless. Socrates leads them first to the fulfillment of their wishes, and then beyond, to a fullfillment which does not depend on the transformation of human nature. The striving for the perfectly just city puts unreasonable and despotic demands on ordinary men, and it abuses and misuses the best men. There is gentleness in Socrates' treatment of men, and his vision is never clouded by the

blackness of moral indignation, for he knows what to expect of men. Political idealism is the most destructive of human passions.

All of Western man's aspirations to justice and the good life are given expression and fulfillment in Socrates' proposals for a city. This is a regime where men's faculties are not denied their exercise by poverty, birth, or sex, where the accidental attachments of family and city do not limit a man's understanding and pursuit of the good; it is a regime, finally, where wise, public-spirited men rule for the common good. But this regime can only be achieved at the sacrifice of other treasured things to which we are less reasonably, but perhaps more powerfully, inclined. These are property, family, and the city of one's birth—all the things a man can love as his own; they exist everywhere and existed long before the emergence of philosophy. Not only do these things constitute the charm of life for most men, they also provide the occasion for the acquisition and the exercise of most of the virtues which can give ordinary men dignity. If reason requires Socrates' city, love of family and friends, patriotism, and even heroism demand the older kind of city. Man's dual nature makes it impossible to solve the problem posed by the two kinds of goods. Every decent regime is some kind of uneasy compromise between them. Socrates' scheme, in a spirit of comedy, proposes the triumph of the side which represents the soul, the side to which the best kind of man can be almost totally devoted, the only rational side. The non-barbaric society is defined by openness to this part of man's longing; this openness to philosophy is the very definition of civilization and carries with it a tendency to wish for the actualization of the regime of the philosopher-kings. It is the light in the cave which Socrates and those near him fought to preserve when its infancy was so severely threatened. But to forget the other side of man—to neglect the irony of Socrates' proposals—is also a fatal error. The cosmopolitan communistic society of egalitarian man is a distortion of man and the city which is more terrible than barbarism. In acting as though the eternal tension between body and soul has been overcome by history, a society is constituted which satisfies neither body nor soul. Such a society creates one universal cave illuminated by an artificial light, for men have not made the sacrifices necessary to the attainment of true cosmopolitanism but have been robbed of those attachments which can give them depth. The thinkers of the Enlightenment, culminating in Marx, preserved Socrates' ultimate goals but forgot his insistence that nature made them impossible for men at large. Only by distorting or narrowing man's horizon can the permanent duality in his nature be overcome.

The *Republic* finally teaches that justice as total dedication to the city cannot be simply good for the philosopher, and that hence it is somewhat questionable for other men as well. For the philosopher to dedicate himself to the city would not

result either in the salvation of mankind or the promotion of his own wisdom. He has to live in a city, however, and must count on other men to preserve him; therefore he must care for at least a modicum of justice in the city. But this care is only necessary, not desirable in itself. The answer to Glaucon's question—Is justice good in itself or only instrumentally?—is that justice conceived as dedication to the city is only instrumentally good. But there is one kind of doing good to one's friends which is also beneficial to the philosopher. There are some young men in whom his soul delights, for they have souls akin to his own and are potential philosophers; these are men who may even aid him in his uncompleted quest for wisdom. Glaucon himself may well be one of them. In the case of most citizens, the philosopher's concern is only that he do them no harm, and his justice thus has the character of a burdensome duty. In the case of the promising young, he is concerned with doing them a positive good, and his justice has the character of love. He must always carry on a contest with the city for the affections of its sons. Although he has a duty to the city, he is always at war with it.

(*543a–569c*) The elaboration of the best regime and the way of life corresponding to it is not a sufficient response to Glaucon's original demand, which was to compare the life of the just man and that of the unjust man with respect to their happiness. In his speech in favor of injustice Glaucon described the advantages of the unjust man's life; those alleged advantages must be looked at again in the light of what Glaucon has learned in the course of the dialogue. If Glaucon is to be converted, he must compare what previously attracted him with what he has come to admire. This calls for a presentation of the bad regimes of city and soul as well as the good.

Following the hypothesis of the dialogue, according to which the city is the soul writ large, Socrates turns first to the discussion of the inferior cities. The parallelism of the city and the soul is maintained here (as it was in Book IV) in spite of the fact that it has become most questionable. This procedure has the rhetorical advantage of making justice, which is admittedly desirable in a city, appear equally desirable in the soul. When Glaucon sees and is forced to admit that the city ruled by a tyrant is a terrible place, he is more easily induced to view the tyrant as a terrible man.

In preparing the direct confrontation of philosopher and tyrant for Glaucon's benefit, Socrates makes use of Adeimantus and his particular qualities. Throughout, Glaucon and Adeimantus have balanced each other, and they are perfectly matched as interlocutors. Without their specific characters and Socrates' judicious blending of them, the founding of the city in speech would have been impossible. Glaucon is the daring, manly lover of victory whose *eros* leads him directly to the conquest of the good things as he sees them, and whose spiritedness aids him in his endeavor.

He is responsible for the progress of the dialogue: it is Glaucon who wanted to go to the Piraeus to see the festival, and who decided for both Socrates and himself that they would heed Polemarchus and Adeimantus and stay. It is Glaucon who was perplexed and interested by Socrates' discussion of payments for ruling; it is he who insisted on continuing the argument about justice and most convincingly portrayed the advantages of injustice. Moreover, it is Glaucon whose appetites forced the abandonment of the city of sows, who compelled Socrates to tell of all the virtues, to introduce the philosopher-kings, and to discuss the good. Glaucon's feverish intensity is the impulse that carries the discussion forward to the greatest innovations and the most extreme satisfaction.

Adeimantus, by contrast, is a moderate man and a lover of tragic poetry. His spiritedness is directed inward and it makes him austere. He is thus a more reliable citizen than Glaucon with his many and powerful desires. He is a moralist and a defender of civil life. He was the one who, by the promise of interesting sights, persuaded Glaucon and Socrates to join the little community of men in the Piraeus. It is Adeimantus who helped Socrates to build the healthy city, and he was contented with it. He is the agent of the purification of the feverish city. And, above all, he is the accuser of Socrates, the one who forces him to stop and justify himself to the city. Adeimantus speaks in the name of the political men who are offended and threatened by both Glaucon's and Socrates' unconventional notions. He accuses Socrates of not making the warriors happy, of robbing his friends of an adequate discussion of communism, and of imposing useless or vicious philosophers on the city as rulers. He is necessary to the building of a city; and he is necessary to that punishment of the bodily passions which is the condition of Glaucon's reformation. Just as Glaucon is dangerous because he is a potential subverter of the laws, Adeimantus is dangerous because he is a potential accuser of philosophy. Just as Glaucon can be useful because he tends toward philosophy, so Adeimantus can be useful because he tends toward public spiritedness.

In Books VIII and IX Adeimantus finally ceases being Socrates' opponent and becomes his wholehearted ally. For at this point a city has been founded in speech of which Socrates is a member; thus, in defending this city, Adeimantus is also defending Socrates. His moralism and moral indignation are now in the service of a city devoted to philosophy, and he is its protector against what threatens it. Adeimantus was previously an admirer of Sparta and used it as a standard to criticize men and cities; Socrates induces him to abandon that standard in favor of the city of the *Republic*, by showing him that the new city has all the virtues of Sparta and is a great improvement on it. The Spartan standard caused Adeimantus to condemn behavior which did not conform to it, which means that he condemned philosophy along with many vices. Now, with his new standard, he will still

condemn those vices, but he will see in the philosopher a blessed remnant of the best regime rather than a sign of the corruption of the times. In order to re-enforce Adeimantus' belief in the reality of this regime and hence in the correctness of using it as a standard, Socrates constructs a myth which assures him that the good city did indeed exist a long time ago. This regime is not only possible, but it (not Sparta or any old regime of Athens) is the truly ancestral regime, and therefore deserves the respect of men like Adeimantus who have the tendency to regard the ancestral as the good. Moreover, Socrates tells the tale in such a way that Adeimantus will not commit any follies in attempting to reinstitute the ancestral regime. It is irrevocably in the past, and any changes in the present regime can only lead to a worse regime. Thus Socrates turns Adeimantus into a conservative and neutralizes his potentially dangerous idealism. Adeimantus will not love the democracy under which he lives, but he will also not want to see it overturned; he will support what is best in that regime and respect the philosopher who lives in the city governed by it. With this altered perspective, Adeimantus joins Socrates in judging the various imperfect regimes and men, and thereby they set the stage for Glaucon's judgment of the tyrannic life.

In Books VIII and IX Socrates sketches the outlines of a political science. This presentation schematizes five fundamental kinds of regimes and five ways of life or types of men who are related to those regimes. Thus a basis is provided for categorizing political phenomena and understanding their causes; such knowledge, in turn, provides guidance in political deliberation and choice. The regime is treated as the most important political fact and the cause of all the other facts. The regime is identical with the class, or kind, of men who hold the ruling offices. As this class varies, so does the way of life of the city. The regime determines the character of law, education, property, marriage, and the family. Therefore, the regime is what must be studied by anyone who is interested in the effect of politics on his life or his pursuit of the good life. This is the most important question, and a relevant political science is designed to answer it. The different kinds of regime are distinguished by their explicit goals, which derive from the ways of life men can choose. Truly different regimes, and men, stem from significant and irreducible differences of principle. Socrates suggests that wisdom, honor, money, freedom, and love are the ends which men pursue and for which they can use the political order; the dominance of one principle or another brings forth very different dimensions in the lives of men. The healthy soul is the standard for the judgment of regimes and the key to understanding them; the healthy regime is the one that allows for the development of healthy souls. Such a political science is more akin to medicine than to mathematics. Political science must be evaluative; just as a doctor must know what a healthy body is, a political scientist must know what a healthy regime

is. Such a political science provides a much richer and more comprehensive framework than that provided by our contemporary political science with its oversimplified dichotomies, democratic versus totalitarian or developed versus underdeveloped. These represent a pale reminiscence of the Socratic approach, impoverished both because we rely too much on the narrow experience of our own time and because of our attempts to erect a value-free science on the foundation of that narrow experience.

Socrates' political science as presented here is not quite serious because it is absurdly severe, using as its standard a regime which can never exist. Socrates still insists that the regime of philosopher-kings can exist and that all other regimes are corruptions of it. His procedure is justified by his desire to include all the highest capacities in the city, to make the complete man a part of the complete city. But the inclusion of the philosopher stretches the limits of the city beyond the realm of the possible. Aristotle elaborated Socrates' sketch and turned it into a true political science by adjusting his standard to the possibilities of political life. Aristotle treats the gentlemen as though their virtue were complete and self-sufficient, thus making it possible to base decent regimes on the gentlemen. In his view, any regime in which the rulers care for the common good is legitimate, and there are a variety of such regimes. Socrates, on the other hand, subjects the nonphilosophic virtues to a harsher scrutiny which reveals that they are seriously flawed. There is hence only one good regime; this is ruled by philosophers, who are the only men with no temptation to get the better of others and exploit the city. Thus, on the basis of a regime which can never be, he is able to cast doubt on the legitimacy of all possible regimes.

Socrates presents political life in this way with the intention of benefiting Glaucon and Adeimantus. He is in the process of leading them back to the level of ordinary political life after their brief ascent toward the sun. They must live in the city, as must most men. But he wishes them to see the city in the light of what they have learned in their ascent; their vision of their world must be transformed. Adeimantus must no longer see philosophy as an enemy of the city, and Glaucon must no longer be tempted by tyranny. Socrates accomplishes this by taking the highest kind of individual and constructing a regime around him. He thus appeals to Adeimantus, by giving political status to that human type, and to Glaucon, by showing him a ruler for whom the practice of justice appears to be an unqualified good. The young man who wishes to live well will pray for that city and its way of life. But this ultimately means that he will, in the absence of that regime, desire to live a private life, for that good life is shown to be possible without the regime; it does not depend, as do the other ways of life, on ruling in the city. It is self-sufficient and always available to him who chooses it. Socrates' political science,

paradoxically, is meant to show the superiority of the private life. The most important point made in this section is that while the best city exists only in myth, the best man exists actually.

Socrates' account of the regimes diverges from common sense in that he insists that the best regime came first and that after it there is a necessary downward movement of decay to timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and finally, tyranny. This is supported neither by argument nor by history. Aristotle in his discussion of the various regimes does not argue that one regime must necessarily emerge from another; worse regimes can certainly precede better ones. The argument of the *Republic* itself has indicated that the regime of the philosophers, or aristocracy, is not first but necessarily last in time. It is furthest away from innocence; it requires experience; it is the result of a great and recent progress in understanding, the discovery of philosophy. As has been suggested, Socrates, contrary to fact, places the best regime first in order that the quest for wisdom not appear to be in conflict with the political prejudice in favor of the ancestral. Aristophanes, in the *Clouds*, accused Socrates of teaching wise sons to beat unwise fathers. If Socrates describes the decay of regimes correctly, there would never be a legitimate ground for beating one's father; in each successive downward step the son is inferior to the father. The quest for self-improvement would be identical to respect for one's forebears. Moreover, the belief in perfect beginnings here expressed is the response to Glaucon's suggestion that civil society is a mere compact between men who prefer to do, rather than suffer, injustice, and who joined together only because of the suffering involved in their original estate. In the account given by Socrates, the foundings or origins of civil society are not in injustice and the blood of the innocent, and the past does not provide a model for tyrannic methods of rule. The harsh facts of the foundings of cities are covered over because of the temptations engendered by their example. Glaucon, in his first speech on justice, asserted that a thing could be understood by its origin, or that its origin is its nature. Socrates taught, in the discussion of the *ideas*, that the end, not the origin, of a thing is its nature. Here he appeals to Glaucon's faulty philosophic understanding by putting what is really the end at the origin. Finally, it must be stressed again that there is a downward movement of the regimes, that there is no indication that this trend can be reversed, and that the final tyranny does not lead back again toward one of the superior regimes. It is the fault of man, not of gods or nature, that decay occurs, but once having occurred, the original state of innocence cannot be recovered. At best men can struggle against further decay, but they cannot hope to establish the best regime by their own effort. By this mode of presentation Socrates teaches Glaucon and Adeimantus that the ancestral is truly respectable because it was wise and just,

and that it cannot be improved upon. Thus he makes them moderate without being closed to reason, as respect for what is truly ancestral would make them.

Socrates and Adeimantus discuss each of the regimes before they discuss the man corresponding to it. Therefore, they have the tendency (as was the case in Book IV) to see in the man what they saw in the city. This predetermines the somewhat questionable result that men have the same rank order of goodness which was found in regimes. For example, there is some doubt whether a man who pursues money alone is simply preferable to one who devotes himself to spending it in a variety of pleasures. But the anti-democratic Adeimantus readily agrees that oligarchy is superior to democracy; thus it appears, from his connection with the oligarchic regime, that the oligarchic man is the superior human type. This is obviously not an exhaustive account of the men under consideration, but it serves Socrates' intention, which is to condemn the tyrannic man. To do this, the desires must be condemned, particularly the erotic desires. This condemnation of the desires is the key to the rank order of the men—the more desire is dominant in them, the lower they are on the scale. However, this principle of order is not manifest to desiring men such as Glaucon. It is given plausibility by the fact that in the cities selfish desire is what most leads to injustice. From a strictly political standpoint, the denigration of desire is necessitated; from the standpoint of an individual who wants to be happy, it is not so easily accepted or seen to be necessary. This hidden tension between the two standpoints is most revealing and must be watched in the description which explicitly argues for their sameness. The similarity of the life of the city to that of the man actually diminishes in the downward progress from timocracy to tyranny. The timocratic man is largely devoted to the same goals as the timocratic city and his description is like that of the city, but the democratic man seems to be able to lead a private life and his description is quite different from that of the city. And, although all would agree that a tyrannically ruled city is the unhappiest of cities, it is hardly clear that the tyrant is the unhappiest of men. In a timocracy, as the city fares, so fares the man. This is not so evidently the case in democracies and tyrannies.

The order of the cities in dignity and goodness—timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny—accords with Adeimantus' tastes and common sense, although it is not in any way demonstrated. Following the principles tacitly established in the *Republic*, a city must provide for the sustenance of the body, be able to defend itself, and have as rulers men who care for the common good. The cities' ranks seem to correspond to their capacity to meet these conditions. Only aristocracy meets them fully, but timocracy comes closest to so doing. Sparta, the model of the timocratic regime, is a republic with a long history of stability and is able to defend its liberty courageously and skillfully. Although the rulers secretly

lust for money, their love of honor protects their devotion to the public, and they are too ashamed to sacrifice their duty to acquisition. Moreover, if their courage is not that of the educated auxiliaries who are convinced that death is nothing terrible, and if they are somewhat too savage, it is undeniable that they can fight very well.

Next in order comes the oligarchic regime, which has neither the perfect rulers of the aristocratic regime nor the love of honor, and hence the courage, of the timocratic regime. The oligarchs turn all of the city's resources to their private gain and are both unwilling and unable to fight. But their continence and sobriety in acquiring and keeping property lend to the regime a certain stability. Because it lacks even the stability of oligarchy, democracy comes fourth. The democrats are incapable of ruling themselves, so they must choose leaders. These demogogues despoil the rich for their own profit while trying to satisfy the demands of the poor. Finally, the city's property is wasted. Democracy is essentially a transitional regime because its principle, freedom, does not encourage the respect for law requisite to the maintenance of a regime. It prepares the way for tyranny, admitted by all to be the worst of regimes, the regime in which the ruler exploits the city simply for his personal benefit.

In his treatment of the destruction of these regimes, Socrates sets down the rule that a regime can be destroyed only by the vice intrinsic to its principle. Oligarchy, for example, because of its attachment to money, necessarily impoverishes vulnerable members of its own class and thus swells the ranks of the poor with able, disaffected men. This regime has to encourage prodigality and hence saps public spiritedness. Oligarchy, in this view, can never be overthrown by an unprovoked, surprise attack by a more powerful neighbor. Its downfall must be a result of its own faults. This assertion of Socrates is akin to his insistence in Book III that the soul is the cause of the body's illness. The regime is the soul of the city, and it causes everything that happens in it; thus domestic policy is all that counts. Socrates abstracts here from accident and particularly from foreign policy. This serves to focus attention on what is most essential in the city, its virtues; these depend entirely on the regime, and its good character is the chief responsibility of the statesmen.

This treatment of the regimes contrasts strongly with the way Socrates treats the men who are supposed to be like them. The man in each case seems to be a member, not of the city he resembles, but of a democratic city and does not share the character of the city in which he lives. (Even the democratic man is not the poor, lean citizen described by Socrates when he spoke of the democratic city.) The various kinds of soul can apparently reach their fulfillment on their own in a democratic city; they are not encouraged by it, nor are they hindered by it. Socrates

describes democracy as a general store stocked with all kinds of regimes; he follows his own suggestion and goes to that store when he wants to select the various kinds of men. Athens is where one has to live in order to know the range of human possibilities. The only type he cannot find there is the tyrant actualizing his potential, but there is a young man present in the discussion who might well like to be one. The change from one kind of man to the next and lower kind is understood by Socrates as a failure of education within the family. It is in each case a superior father who is unable to make his son like himself. And here, as opposed to the discussion of the regimes, the changes in the crucial instances are in part caused by what might be called problems of foreign policy. The cities were isolated, and their difficulties arose out of the relations of the parts within them. But the aristocratic and timocratic men have difficulties in their relations with the city, and because of the unsatisfactory character of those relations, the sons reject the fathers' ways of life in favor of ways which are more suited to success in the city. Thus they become inferior men. Socrates appears to be teaching that the fatal error consists in taking the city too seriously and adapting to its demands, thus that men need not be like the regimes, that the regimes need not be the primary fact of their lives, particularly if they live in a democracy.

The good city's corruption was mysterious and shrouded in myth; the very existence of that city was questionable. The only nonmythical account one can give of it is that drawn from a comparison with the causes of the corruption of the inferior regimes: the preoccupation with the acquisition of property and the difficulties involved in its distribution make it impossible for the city to devote itself to the good use of that property or, simply, to the good life. The body cannot be forgotten, and thus it is impossible to renounce everything connected with private property and concentrate only on the soul. The possession of private property is the crucial change from the best regime to the second best, and all the ills which beset the various regimes follow from that change. The city's primary business becomes the management of property and is, hence, the dedication to mere life. It is no accident that in the list of regimes the central one is oligarchy, for in its pursuit of money, it incarnates the concern of the real city. The private desires which money represents and can fulfill and which are at a tension with public spirit become more and more dominant as one goes down the slope of the regimes. Socrates indicates that because a city is a composite of many kinds of men, of whom very few are capable of love of knowledge, no city can avoid the fundamental compromise with private property.

The corruption of the aristocrat's son, on the other hand, can be seen by all. Unlike the aristocratic city, the aristocratic man really exists; he is a philosopher. Moreover, he is exactly like Socrates. He devotes himself to learning; he is totally

indifferent to his body and other men's opinions of him; he is utterly dedicated and single-minded. But his wife, like Xanthippe, cannot endure the fact that her husband, and thereby she herself, is unhonored and despised. She, along with other like-minded people, convinces his son that this is no way to live. She echoes Callicles, who in the *Gorgias* accused the philosopher of being unmanly, of being incapable of honorably avenging insults. Man's fall from the state of innocence is a result of a woman's temptings. The son's spiritedness is awakened, and he lives the life of a proud man, performing those deeds which will make him respected by others. Such a life entails the abandonment of philosophy, both because he no longer has time for it and because the questions raised by it are not appropriate to a gentleman. He now lives for the opinions of other men and no longer for himself. His father was not truly a citizen—he was in the city but not of it; but that father's son becomes a part of the city by adapting himself to it.

The timocrat's son, in turn, is corrupted when he sees his father mistreated by the people. He was too proud to court the people and lost everything. Fear becomes the son's motivation; he abandons pride, for it is dangerous. His father was spiritually dependent on the people; his condemnation ruins his life. The son recognizes that the father's apparent independence was groundless. Now life, bodily life, becomes dominant. The only source of security is in money which can guarantee the means of life. The father had money and did not pay sufficient attention to the need he had for it. Spiritedness cannot maintain itself against this awareness. The son is completely dependent on things outside himself, and desire has become the principle of his life. The example of Socrates teaches that a man should live in the city like a sovereign nation unto himself, with only such relations to other citizens as are dictated by a defensive prudence.

In order to show how this oligarchic man's son becomes a democratic man, Socrates makes a distinction between the necessary and unnecessary desires, which explains the difference between the oligarch and the democrat. The necessary desires are those which contribute to the maintenance of life; the unnecessary ones are those that we could do without. Socrates appears to include even sex in this latter category. Presumably because of his father's success at providing money, the democratic son has devoted himself to many desires and not limited himself to the necessary ones as did his austere father. On the basis of Socrates' description, it is not at all clear why the democratic son should be considered inferior to his oligarchic father who has spent his life pursuing money, despoiling others. The young democrat seems to be a rather charming, if aimless, fellow. It is easy to see why a democratic regime might well be considered inferior to an oligarchic one, but this would only serve to show the difference between the solid life of the city and the agreeable life of man. Neither the oligarchic nor democratic regime or man is

devoted to any virtue, but at least the democratic man's principle does not preclude the practice of virtue. As has been observed, this judgment against the democratic man is part of a general condemnation of desire leading to the condemnation of the tyrant, who is taken to be *the* man of desire. The desires are interpreted as the bodily desires which, when emancipated, are infinite and make man's needs infinite. Their moderation is necessary both for political stability and for the possibility of philosophizing. For the many, the praise of desire is the praise of bodily desire, and this must be controlled for the sake of both philosophy and politics.

But this is only a partial account, for among the objects that the disorganized democrat pursues, on the same level as flute-playing and dieting, is philosophy. To him it is not a serious occupation, but democracy is nevertheless the only one of the practicable regimes in which philosophy makes an appearance. Democracy is merely indifferent to philosophy, while the other regimes are positively hostile to it. The moral or fiscal austerity of timocracy and oligarchy preclude the leisure necessary to philosophy and condemn the thought produced by it; at the same time, life in these regimes is too organized for philosophy to be able to escape unnoticed for long. And the tyrant is frightened by the wise and free-minded. Philosophy is among the unnecessary desires and hence finds its home in democracy. Timocracy, the best practicable regime, is the regime furthest removed from philosophy; paradoxically, Socrates the citizen praises timocracy, while Socrates the philosopher desires democracy. He is actually engaged in a defense of democracy against its enemies, the potential tyrants and the lovers of Sparta, not because he can be dedicated to democracy but precisely because it does not demand dedication. After showing the impossibility, and perhaps the undesirability, of a regime to which he could be dedicated, he progressively abandons it in favor of the regime which leaves him free, the only real regime in which he can prosper.

Socrates' harsh and apparently insensitive criticism of tragedy as a servant of democracy, and particularly of tyranny, is part of the same condemnation of desire which leads him in this context to prefer the oligarch to the democrat. Tragedy is indeed the taste of democracies and tyrannies, as opposed to timocracies and oligarchies. The other cities are too busy to develop such tastes and consider them a danger to moral virtue or to sound economics. Tragedy requires the emancipation of, and the appeal to, desires which are denied or suppressed in the other regimes. Tragedy, therefore, encourages those desires and must be condemned insofar as those regimes are inferior. But if democracy and tyranny contain elements of humanity lacking in other regimes, tragedy's alliance with them may be partially justified. Specifically, the very desires which existed but were denied to exist in other regimes are the themes of tragedy. Thus, tragedy can both learn and teach about man in the inferior regimes where these desires are permitted. In one sense,

it is a mistake to give way to these desires, but to turn one's back on them is to misunderstand man. And the suppression of these desires is allied with the suppression of philosophy. Just as philosophy is unnecessary, so is poetry. The real quarrel with tragedy does not concern its implicit rejection of the self-control requisite to timocracy and oligarchy, but rather the absence in it of any knowledge of the true aristocracy and, because it lacks that counterpoise, the consequent inclination to take the desires and passions too seriously. This criticism of poetry in Book VIII prepares the way for the re-examination of philosophy's powerful opponent in Book X.

(*571a–592b*) At last Socrates comes to his description of the tyrant. He is the public fulfillment of the private desires which first quietly entered the city hidden in the soul of the timocratic man. Once the pleasure of philosophy has disappeared, man is split between duty and desire with no adequate motive for the choice of duty over desire. Socrates indicates that the tyrant's life would be the appropriate choice of a way of life if philosophy did not exist, if the bodily pleasures were the only pleasures and the mind had no pleasures of its own. The self-control demanded by morality has no cosmic support if it is not in the service of a higher pleasure. The timocratic man's devotion to duty is groundless, and the oligarchic and democratic men represent unsteady compromises between duty and desire. Socrates can only prove the inferiority of the tyrannic life to Glaucon by way of the superiority of the philosophic life, of which Glaucon has only a glimmering. To be sure, he has been prepared for the choice by the beautiful images of the philosophic life in Book VII and by the moral indignation evoked by the decay of political life depicted in Book VIII. But, although all men readily admit that to live under a tyranny is the worst of political fates, they are not so ready to admit that the tyrant is the unhappiest of men, precisely because he has succeeded in winning the struggle for those scarce goods which reputedly make a man happy. It is to this problem that Socrates addresses himself in Book IX.

Socrates characterizes the tyrant as the erotic man; and *eros*, as Cephalus said in the very beginning of the dialogue, is a mad master. Socrates now makes a further distinction among the unnecessary desires; some of them are law-abiding, and others are law-breaking. The erotic desires lead to breaking of the law, to daring everything, to that omnivorous taste for all good things which makes a man the enemy of law and other men. The democratic man was unerotic, and this gave him an easygoing, harmless quality and rendered him innocuous. His lack of erotic passion prevented him from taking anything very seriously. This is not the case with a man whose sexual passion is very intense. Glaucon is such a man, and it is the wish to satisfy this part of his nature that attracts him to tyranny; for tyranny is the

only regime in which no satisfaction can be denied him—it provides the freedom, power, and money a lover needs. *Eros* is the most dangerous and powerful of the desires, an infinite longing which consumes all other attachments in its heat. It, too, however, is ambiguous. Up to this point the *Republic* has continuously attacked *eros* when it has not overlooked it. It is hard to imagine that its author is also the author of the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. But it must be observed that the *eros* attacked is the lust for other bodies, and that this is done in the name of both politics and philosophy. Politics seems to be hostile to any form of extreme eroticism, but what about philosophy? It is clear in Books VI and VII that love of wisdom is a form of *eros*, and that the hostility to *eros* is limited to the kind which precludes the development of philosophic *eros*. The political and philosophic critiques of *eros* are therefore not in total harmony. If the radically incomplete discussion of the soul in the *Republic* were to be made comprehensive, it would have to be enlarged to provide an adequate account of *eros*. (For example, in Book IX it becomes clear that the spirited and rational parts of the soul have their specific desires; desire is not limited to the lowest part which has been called the desiring part.) The present interpretation of *eros* does serve the purpose of moderating Glaucon's passion, which is both anti-political and anti-philosophic. But the obvious incompleteness of this understanding of *eros* leads to an awareness of a hidden kinship between the tyrant and the philosopher. There are certain kinds of things (for example, incest) which a gentleman is not even willing to think about, let alone do. Sometimes against his will such things find expression in his dreams. The tyrant is willing both to think about them and to do them when wide awake. The philosopher, as we have seen in the *Republic*, is at least willing to think about them, and they hold none of the peculiar horror for him that they do for the gentleman. This is because both tyrant and philosopher depreciate law or convention (*nomos*) in their quest for nature (*physis*). *Eros* is nature's demonic voice. The tyrant and the philosopher are united in their sense of their radical incompleteness and their longing for wholeness, in their passion and in their singlemindedness. They are the truly dedicated men.

The potential tyrant, if saved from corruption, may also very well be the potential philosopher. The young man drawn to tyranny, like the philosopher, is allowed to flourish only in the democracy. Socrates, by curing Glaucon of his lust for tyrannic pleasures, can indulge his own lust for beautiful souls while at the same time acting the part of the good citizen who defends his city's regime. The democracy satisfies everything: it lets Socrates be a philosopher, at least until he is seventy; it provides him with students by allowing the emergence of unnecessary and unlawful desires; and by permitting him to convert those possessed by these

desires to philosophy, it gives him the opportunity to show that he loves his country.

Socrates attempts to prove to Glaucon that the tyrant is the unhappiest of men. His argument consists of two parts. In the first place, the tyrant cannot fulfill his desires; he must always continue his longing, become hated, and do every terrible deed. In sum, he is the least self-sufficient of men, utterly dependent on external things and thus full of anxiety. Second, the tyrannic life is not the pleasantest life. The latter argument is again divided into two parts. According to the first, each of the three parts of the soul has its own specific pleasure. The man who knows all three pleasures would be the best judge of which is the greatest pleasure. Only the philosopher knows all three, however, and he chooses the pleasure of philosophy. According to the second part of the argument, the tyrant's pleasures are all mixed and allied to pain, while the philosophic pleasures are pure. The tyrant's pleasures are unreal because they are linked to becoming which is itself somehow unreal; the philosopher is attached to being, and hence his pleasures are real. It will be noted that Socrates makes the choice between tyranny and philosophy depend on pleasure.

This aspect of the teaching of the *Republic* is powerfully presented by Aristotle in *Politics* (II, vii). In criticizing an economic solution of the political problem advanced by Phaleas of Chalcedon, Aristotle asserts that there are three causes of men's doing injustice: want of the necessities, desire for more than what is necessary, and desire to enjoy independent pleasures which are pure and unmixed with pain. In Socrates' presentation the oligarch is preoccupied with the necessary, the democrat with the unnecessary, and the tyrant with the unlawful pleasures. Aristotle explicitly identifies the man who wishes the pleasures which have no admixture of pain with the one who commits the greatest crimes and longs for tyranny. He also indicates that this is the most interesting kind of man. He suggests three cures for the three causes of injustice: a small amount of property and work, moderation, and philosophy. The quest for pure pleasures is the motivation of the higher kind of free man who no longer has to worry about the necessary. But this quest can only be fulfilled through philosophy because "the other [pleasures] require human beings." Only philosophy is pure pleasure and is self-sufficient, not entailing the use of other men. Most radically posed, the moral problem consists in a simple alternative: either philosophy or tyranny is the best way of life. Other solutions are only halfway measures. If philosophy did not exist, tyranny would be the desideratum which only a lack of vigor would cause one to reject.

This choice between the philosophic and tyrannic lives explains the plot of the *Republic*. Socrates takes a young man tempted by the tyrannic life and attempts to give him at least that modicum of awareness of philosophy which will cure him of

the lust for tyranny. Any other exhortation would amount to empty moralism. The young man drawn to tyranny is the illustration of Aristotle's maxims that man is both the best and the worst of animals, and that the man living outside the city (in the sense of not participating in its law) must be either a god or a beast. In the *Republic* Socrates has included both god and beast in the city, and this accounts for the difference between his political science and Aristotle's. Socrates, unlike Aristotle, makes *eros* a political principle. Although tyranny and the tyrannic man are in one way the furthest from philosophy, they are in another the nearest to it. This is why Socrates is attracted to those dangerous young men, the potential tyrants, who are products of the democracy. With some of these young men (for example, Critias and Alcibiades) his training failed, and as a result he was condemned. But with others (for example, Xenophon and Plato) he succeeded, and they have exculpated him.

Since the time when Glaucon first asked for a comparison of the lives of the just and unjust men, the action of the *Republic* has steadily moved toward it. The question has changed en route, for the comparison is now between the philosopher and the tyrant; this would not have satisfied Glaucon at the beginning, nor does it prove the superiority of justice over injustice, unless justice is philosophy and injustice tyranny. But such a comparison does cast light on the original problem; although the just man on the rack is not proved to be happy, it is clear that happiness does not depend on anything tyranny can acquire. Glaucon's notion of the good things has been altered by the marvelous things he has experienced in this conversation. Previously he thought that both just and unjust man desired the same things; now he sees the possibility of a life—the life of Socrates—which is self-sufficient and happy. The needfulness of tyranny has become questionable, and Glaucon will never again be able to pose the problem as he once did. Happiness is not connected with the exploitation of other human beings. Socrates makes an image of the soul for Glaucon's benefit; the desiring part is compared to a many-headed beast, the spirited part to a lion, and the rational part to a man. Socrates thus explains that the laws which impose moderation are not made in the interest of an exploiter but in the interest of the soul as opposed to the body, of reason as opposed to desire. This would, of course, hold true only in the best regime, but Glaucon himself is now able to say that that makes no difference. Previously it had appeared that one must found a city and live within it to be a complete man, but now it appears that a man can be happy on his own. The good city exists only in speech and is a pattern in the sky for those who want to live well; justice is obedience to the laws of that regime. At last man can break from the earthly city, and Glaucon has gained an inner freedom from its claims and its charms.

(*595a–608b*) With the confrontation of the philosopher and the tyrant, the discussion appears to have reached its end, but Socrates once more raises the subject of poetry. This is surprising, and it is difficult to see why we should return to this topic after the lengthy discussion of it in Book III. That treatment, however, dealt only with the uses and disadvantages of poetry in the education of the warriors, men who needed courage and the salutary tales which would encourage it. Homer is the teacher of the Greeks, and his title to that role must be examined. In the earlier discussion, Homer's hero, Achilles, was the theme; in this discussion, Homer himself is the theme. The light tone adopted by Socrates here, the ease with which he apparently dismisses poetry, must not cause one to forget that he is taking it very seriously indeed. Poetry is *the* opponent, and there is an ancient quarrel between it and philosophy. Homer is read or listened to by all the Greeks; he speaks of all things in their interrelations, and he tells of the gods. Homer and the other great poets constitute the respectable tribunal before which philosophy is tried. Socrates is afraid of being denounced to them, as though they were the law; and in a sense they do reflect that law and determine the opinions that make it. However, Book X attempts to reverse this situation. Socrates begins by making an *apology* to the poets and ends by opening the way for them to make an *apology* to him. Socrates does not wish to destroy poetry; he only wishes to judge it, rather than be judged by it.

The other themes of Book X help to clarify the grounds for this final consideration of poetry. The immortality of the soul and the rewards of justice are also discussed, particularly the rewards after death. Moreover, Book X culminates in a poetic myth; after appearing to reject poetry, Socrates uses it to describe the *cosmos* and the fate of man, the broadest possible objects of human discourse. Poetry is necessary to Socrates' project of reforming Glaucon, but it must be a new kind of poetry, one which can sustain Glaucon in a life of moral virtue and respect for philosophy. It is not, then, that poetry must be entirely banished but that it must be reformed. Book X begins with a criticism of Homeric poetry and ends with an example of Socratic poetry. Separating the two is a discussion of the immortality of the soul. The difference between the old poetry and the new lies in their understanding of the soul; the old poetry seems to lead necessarily to a view of the soul which is inimical to philosophy. The *cosmos* or *chaos* of pre-Socratic poetry contained no support for either the moral or theoretical life. The River Ocean which surrounds Homer's world is a thing of constant, meaningless change. Poetry, taken on its own ground, portraying those subjects on which it can best reveal its powers, culminates in the hero Achilles. And it is Achilles who bemoans his fate and asserts his preference for serfdom on earth to the kingdom over the dead. Life,

mere life, is all that counts, for what is beyond it is a void, justifying neither a life of nobility nor one of learning.

The text for *Republic*, Book X, is *Odyssey*, Book XI, the account of Odysseus' visit to the dead. The difference between Odysseus' experiences among the dead and those of Er is an indication of what Socrates is trying to teach. Er found rewards and punishments for just and unjust souls; but, more important, he also found an order of the universe which makes this world intelligible and provides a ground for the contemplative life. At the source of all things, Er saw that soul is the first principle of the cosmic order; hence the proper study of the universe is the study of the soul. What is best in man is not in conflict but in harmony with the nature of things. The myth of Er is only a tale, just as is Odysseus' descent to Hades; there is small likelihood that Soccrates believed in the survival of the individual soul. But this tale is a poetic reflection of the view which makes philosophy possible just as it is indicated that Homer's tale reflects the view connected with an autonomous poetry. Men need poetry, but the kind of poetry which nourishes their souls makes all the difference in their understanding of their nonpoetic lives. Socrates outlines a new kind of poetry which leads beyond itself, which does not present man's only alternatives as tragic or comic, which supports the philosophic life. He gives the principle which Aristotle developed in the *Poetics*, and which is embodied in the works of men such as Dante and Shakespeare. It is still poetry, but poetry which points beyond itself.

Socrates begins his quarrel with Homer by asking Glaucon what he would think of a craftsman who "is not only able to make all implements but also makes everything that grows naturally from the earth, and produces all animals—the others and himself too—and, in addition, produces earth and heaven and gods and everything in heaven and everything in Hades under the earth." Glaucon responds that such a man must be a most amazing sophist, but Socrates hastens to assure him that this maker's power is nothing surprising and is within everyone's reach. Socrates tells Glaucon, ". . . if you are willing to take a mirror and carry it around everywhere, quickly you will make the sun and the things in the heaven; quickly, the earth; and quickly, yourself and the other implements and plants and everything else that was just now mentioned" (596c–e). This seems an almost unbelievably crude and insensitive way to depreciate the value of poetry's representations. Socrates accuses the poet of being a charlatan who deceives men and who has no claim to wisdom whatsoever. However, a closer examination of the passages cited will show that Socrates' point here is subtler than immediately appears. The man who carries the mirror around will not catch the reflections of some of the things which appeared in the sophist's mirror: no ordinary mirror can reflect the gods and the things in Hades; the sun would have to take their place. Only the poets and the

painters can reproduce the gods and the life after death, and they have no models for their imitation of them in the works of other craftsmen or in the visible universe. The poets are the authentic, the only, teachers about the gods.• The great mystery is how they find out about them, how they are able to present them to men. Socratic poetry also must tell about the gods and the afterlife. This does not constitute the difference between the old poetry and the new; the gods are the center, not to say the essence, of both. The real quarrel between Socrates and Homer concerns the way in which one finds out about the gods, or the view of the whole which causes a poet to present the gods in one way rather than another. Socrates' criticism of Homeric poetry is really a study of the principles of his theogony or theology, a study of the nature of the Homeric gods.

Socrates' first step in his analysis of Homeric wisdom is to attempt to establish the nature of a poem. A poem, he asserts, like a painting, is a particular being which has a curious sort of existence. It represents other particular beings which are beings because they, in turn, partake of a single, self-subsistent being. Poetry is dependent on the world around us; it does not make its objects, and its strength comes from the depth of its grasp of those objects. Socrates makes the point that Homer's book presupposes knowledge of the book of the world, which Homer does not make; he is not creative and must be judged by that external standard. Poetry is imitation. Now Socrates takes the strange step of testing the poet's knowledge by comparing it to the knowledge of the artisan who makes the thing imitated. This procedure has a kind of surface plausibility, in that the poem does indeed imitate the objects of the various arts, and that the knowledge of the latter belongs to the practitioners of those arts. In this way the poet comes off very badly indeed because he is surely not a knower of all the diverse arts; his representation is only a shadow of the competent opinions of the artisans. But all of this is somehow very wrong. In the first place, not everything represented in poetry is an artifact; indeed, its most interesting objects are not products of art. Second, poetry presents its objects in their interrelations, as no particular art can do. The specialist in health does not as such know the proper uses of a healthy body. Poetry is essentially comprehensive or synoptic, and this distinguishes it from the special arts. The poem is a collection of imitations, but it is informed by the vision of the poet, a vision that transcends the level of the special arts.

The further development of the argument gradually reveals the reasons for this unusual presentation. Since it has been determined that the artisans are the standard of knowledge, it follows that if Homer is to be authoritative, he must have exercised all of the arts or at least the most important ones. Homer, if he was so skilled and is an appropriate teacher of the Greeks, should be famous for his deeds as well as his

speeches. His favorite themes are human virtues and vices, so it is proper to see what he did as a legislator, general, educator, etc. It is evident that he had a reputation in none of these fields, and it is even said that he was neglected and abandoned in his own lifetime. It therefore follows that Homer is not a reliable teacher of the most important human things. The tacit assumption of the argument is that it is better to be a doer than a knower, or that knowledge is only tested in action—in benefits to other men.

But a moment's reflection makes one aware that these charges against Homer apply at least as well to Socrates. He was not a lawgiver, a leader in war, an inventor, or a professor in the manner of Protagoras; there was also no way of life named after Socrates as there was a Pythagorean way of life. He was worse than neglected by his contemporaries. Yet he, too, understood himself to be wise in human things. The authority to talk about human things does not come from the study of any of the arts, and Homer and Socrates are one in their neglect of the arts and their divorce from the practical life. What Socrates shows in this presentation is that the ordinary standards for judgment of the worth of an activity or depth of wisdom are not applicable to Homer or himself. Wisdom has another source than art, and there is another kind of relation to the *ideas* than that of the artisan. A wise man is judged, not by any deed that he performs, but by the quality of his knowledge. And that knowledge is not like that of the artisan who produces something which can be used and who deals with a special subject matter. Wisdom is sought for its own sake, and it is comprehensive, interrelating the various arts and their products. Both Homer and Socrates in some way possess this kind of knowledge; they both have a view of the whole. Homer produces a product as the artisans do, but that product is distinguished from the artisans' products in that it reflects a view of the whole, and its maker is by his very nature a man who must reflect on the whole.

What Socrates implicitly criticizes Homer for is that he cannot explain the grounds for that view of the whole or for the way of life devoted to knowing it. Homer appears as a celebrator of heroes, of men of action, and hence as their inferior. Speech seems to be subordinate to deed. Nothing in the Homeric poems indicates the dignity of the poet; there are no heroes who give an account of the poet's own doings, nor is there a picture of a universe which makes it possible to comprehend the possibility of wisdom. Socrates accuses Homer of not reflecting on himself, and hence making a world in which there is no place for himself. His poem is not a compendium of imitations of the various arts because it is animated by a view of the whole. But because he does not provide a basis for that view, because the truth of that view is not the center of the poet's concern, Socrates is legitimated in treating him as though he were merely a universal imitator of the arts

to be judged by every artisan, or an incompetent statesman. This line of reasoning serves to point up the way in which Homer differs from the artisans and the men of action and is like Socrates. They are both devoted to the most comprehensive understanding of things. The real question, then, is what is the source and status of the view of the whole which informs Homer's works?

In the next part of the discussion Socrates explores this question. He had earlier asserted that the painter, or, implicitly, the poet, is one of three craftsmen who in a way make the same product and that he stands farthest of the three from what *is*. A divine craftsman makes the idea, for example, of a bed. (The *ideas* were in this context understood not as eternal but as the product of art, thus constituting a world in which artisans or makers, rather than knowers, are the highest human beings.) A human craftsman looks to the *idea* of a bed and makes a bed. And the painter or poet looks to the bed made by the human craftsman and makes an image of a bed. He is thus an imitator of an imitator and his products have very little reality. Now, however, Socrates abandons the reference to the *ideas* and their maker, and no longer asserts that the craftsman look to *ideas* in their making. He substitutes a common-sense notion for all of this. The craftsman is indeed dependent, however, not on an *idea* but on the command of the man who uses his products. The poet is still at the bottom, but now there is a human being at the top who practices what Socrates calls the user's art. The horseman, who knows the equipment necessary to using a horse well, can tell the artisans what he needs and give them their impulse without knowing their arts; he is more important than they are, and the end of their activity is his activity. The user's art comes closer to poetry and philosophy in that it, too, deals with the relations of things and is not restricted to any single art. The broadest such art would be the one that treats of happiness—the legislator's art. The legislator organizes the whole city with a view to the good life—the end of all action—and the various arts ultimately are guided by the role their products play in that life. The horseman who told the saddlemaker and the blacksmith what he needed, is, in turn, told by the general what is needed from the cavalry; and the general, finally, is told by the statesmen or the legislator what the army must do. Only the legislator oversees the whole; and by looking to the legislator, the artisans know what the purpose or end of their products is. There is no *idea* which the legislator can look to and imitate mechanically; his art comprises wisdom entire. *The* user's art is political science, of which Socrates is the founder. To follow out the image of the *Republic*, the sheep are guarded by dogs who are obedient to shepherds who are in the service of owners: the people are guarded by warriors who are obedient to guardians who are ultimately obedient to philosophers or who are philosophers themselves. In the best case the legislators are philosophers, but in any case the legislator is the master of the city.

In this perspective it becomes clear what Socrates means when he says that the poet is an imitator of an imitator. The poet imitates the legislator. He must appeal to an audience; and in that sense he imitates the tastes and passions of that audience. But the tastes and passions of the audience have been formed by the legislator, who is understood to be the craftsman who builds the city according to the pattern provided by his view of nature. Thus the poet, who looks to the audience which looks to the legislator, is at the third remove from nature. The poet's function leads him to be a servant of convention; his works give the illusion of nature, but are fundamentally affected by convention, and thus they deceive man in his quest for nature. To put the same thing in a different way, the poet must imitate heroes in his poems. But those heroes are the heroes of his nation who are also children of the legislator or the founder of the Greek way of life. Because the poet looks to what is around him or is conveyed by the tradition, and because he must appeal to an audience, he is peculiarly prone to become involved in the popular prejudices. Rousseau, in his *Letter to d'Alembert*, has accurately reproduced this aspect of Socrates' critique of poetry and given it a modern force. What Socrates stresses is that there is nothing in the poet's art which impels him to the discovery of what is truly natural and much that inclines him to serve convention. If a poet shares the perspective of the philosophic legislator, if he is capable of the moral and intellectual virtue required for such a liberation, and if that perspective can inform his poetry, Socrates has no quarrel with him.

From this viewpoint, one can also understand what Socrates meant by treating the poet as an imitator of artifacts. In one sense man is a natural being, but in another he is a product of *nomos*, convention. Men and men's ways differ from place to place as trees and their ways do not. The law transforms men to such an extent that many can doubt whether there is such a thing as human nature at all. Even if there is a natural man, or, more classically expressed, a man who lives according to nature, civil society and its laws must aid in his coming to be. Civil men, the dwellers in the cave, are in the decisive sense the artifacts of the legislator: their opinions are made by him. Human making has a great deal to do with our perception of even the things which seem most unambiguously natural. Men see the beautiful sunset, the noble river, the terrifying storm or the sacred cow. To know these things we must separate what belongs to them naturally from what opinion adds to them. Poetry tends to blend the natural and conventional elements in things; and it charms men in such a way that they no longer see the seams of the union of these two elements.

It is not sufficient, however, to say that the poet is an imitator of an imitator, for Socrates knows that the poet is not simply slavishly subservient to the law and the legislator. The tragic poet depicts men's misfortunes and their lamentations. In

Book III it was stated that good men do not suffer at the loss of those dear to them, and the poets had been commanded to so depict them. Now Socrates admits that they do indeed lament, but they do so in private. The poet's fault lies in publicizing what is properly private. His crime consists of breaking the legislator's command that moral virtue must always be represented as leading to happiness. In other words, the poet tells the truth about the passions, a truth suppressed by the law. Men are attached to their own things, and much of the significance of life comes from those things, which are not necessarily acquired or kept by the exercise of the moral virtues. The legislator taught that nobility and happiness are one; the poets separate the two and reveal the truth. As a matter of fact, the legislator, as we saw in Book III, turns to the poet when he wishes to learn the nature of the human passions. In order to know what in man has to be overcome in order to establish a good regime, Socrates studies Homer.

Homer, then, is not Socrates' opponent because he knows nothing of nature. It is rather because he knows only that part of nature which causes men to laugh or cry, the part that makes human life appear either ridiculous or miserable. The poets deal with the failures of acting men and show what the *Republic* has also shown—that the practical or moral life is essentially self-contradictory and is hence either comic or tragic. But the poets do not show, and perhaps do not believe in, the possibility of a noncontradictory life lived by a man who is neither comic nor tragic. They water man's laughter and his pity without giving him a counterpoise; hence they justify laughter and pity as ultimate responses to the human situation. Pity, in particular, is a passion connected with one's own possible sufferings; it sees the losses suffered by even the noblest of men and recognizes how threatened are the things for which a man lives. Pity, grown great, ends in terror caused by the misery of man's existence. The man overwhelmed by pity and fear is the man least of all able to forget himself and his own, and hence the things that will protect him and give his life meaning. Most of all, he looks to the laws and the gods, and his pity can well make him a fanatic. The natural passions of men which Homer knows and appeals to are those that most attach a man to convention and hence to bondage in the cave. And the Homeric gods are such as to encourage and satisfy the pitying part of man's soul.

Socrates admits the overwhelming charm of poetry, a charm composed of elements drawn on the one hand, from the attachment to one's particular existence and what is connected with it, and, on the other hand, from the pleasure which accompanies the contemplation of the truth. But the truth which poetry reveals is only a partial truth, and, in liberating from the conventions or laws of a city, it can contribute to an enslavement to the source of convention, the love of one's own. Reason is the only instrument with which to fight laughter and pity. But poetry

belongs essentially to the faculty of imagination, a faculty necessary to reasoning, one, however, which can also be at war with it. The overcoming of the attachment to one's own is a monstrous endeavor, and the passions served by poetry rebel against it; but that endeavor is necessary to philosophy.

This, then, is the essence of the quarrel between philosophy and poetry. Socrates banishes poetry once more, but this time offers it a return if it can learn to argue, to justify itself before the bar of philosophy. He points the way to Aristotle's understanding of tragedy as a purgation of the passions of pity and fear rather than their satisfaction. Such tragedy would prepare a man to be reasonable and moderate after having purged those terrible passions; it would pay due attention to man's necessary love of his own, but would temper it in such a way as to allow him some freedom from it. Thus tragedy would neither give way to these passions nor deny their existence. It would then be an important part of the education of decent, unfanatic men. Poetry will return, but only after having learned to subordinate itself, to mitigate its unguided tendencies toward indulgence and fanaticism. When the poets depict the gods they must no longer look to laughter and pity but to the *ideas*.

(*608c–621d*) The discussion of poetry is a preparation for a discussion of the rewards and punishments of justice and injustice. Poetry will tell, as it always has, the tales of the wages of virtue in this life and the next. The theme appears to be more appropriate to poetic than philosophic treatment, both in terms of the things discussed and the audience to which it is relevant. Socrates, in undertaking this discussion, disobeys Glaucon's explicit command, for the latter had insisted that a true praise of justice in itself would have to abstract from any rewards extrinsic to justice which might accrue to it. Socrates thus returns to the conventional way of praising justice which Adeimantus has criticized. Glaucon and Adeimantus permit Socrates to do so because they are now more favorably disposed to justice; Socrates must do so because the dialogue has not sufficiently demonstrated that citizen virtue is choiceworthy for itself, and Glaucon and Adeimantus are not capable of philosophic virtue.

The first step of the praise is to extend the range of consideration beyond this life to eternity because eternity is the proper study of man, and because the promiscuity of fortune in this life would tend to make men believe that justice goes unrewarded and injustice unpunished. So Socrates undertakes to convince Glaucon that the soul is immortal. This discussion can hardly rank as a proof, and there is no attempt at all to show that the *individual* soul is immortal, which is the only thing a man anxious about his fate after life would care about. Moreover, Socrates admits that we know nothing about the soul, which denies the value of the

argument, calling into question the teaching of the whole dialogue which was based on an understanding of the soul. This discussion then serves two purposes: to cause the unphilosophic man to be concerned about justice for fear of what will happen to him in another world, and to turn philosophic men to the study of the soul. The soul is *the* philosophic question, and it is his concern for this question that distinguishes Socrates from his predecessors; the most characteristic part of his teaching is that soul is irreducible and that it is somehow the principle of the *cosmos*. The shade of Achilles in Hades is offensive not only to good morals but to the possibility of philosophy, for Achilles seems to show that the human soul has no support in the *cosmos*. Socratic thought combines the apparently contradictory concerns of earlier poetry and earlier philosophy; he can understand man and understand nature, for the two are informed by the same principle, soul. The *Republic*, which seems to give a completed teaching about politics and the soul, ends with a return to philosophic doubt, to the conviction that one's opinions are open to unanswered, if not unanswerable, questions. In one sense one can even say that the book has taught us nothing other than the necessity of philosophy and its priority and superiority to the political life.

The myth of Er merely reiterates this message. According to this myth there is a rational cosmic order to which each individual's fate is attached. In the afterlife happiness and misery are distributed according to virtues and vices practiced during life. This encourages decent men to persist in their efforts to be virtuous; for if they succeed, a wonderful thousand-year voyage through the heavens awaits them. But the myth also makes clear that the civic virtues do not suffice for a man's salvation for all eternity, and that, unless he has philosophized on earth, this voyage will profit him nothing. For each man must choose a new life, and that new life will determine whether he will fare well or ill in his next thousand-year sojourn among the dead; the correct choice of a life depends on knowledge of the soul, not on the practice of moral virtue. Those who have been rewarded for moral virtue in the afterlife are less well prepared than are those who have been punished to make the proper choice of life. We see a decent man, one like Cephalus, who has just come from his rewards, choose a tyrant's life; for only law and convention had kept him in bounds in his earlier life, and his real view of happiness led him to envy tyrants. He has learned nothing in the afterlife; there is apparently no philosophy in the afterlife for those who did not practice it on earth; the soul is not perfected by the separation from the body. For all men other than the philosopher, there is a constant change of fortune from happiness to misery and back. The myth attributes full responsibility to men for what happens to them and thus teaches that there is no sin but ignorance.

The key to Er's account of his visit to the other world is the absence of Achilles. He says that Ajax was the twentieth soul he saw. Ajax was the twentieth shade seen by Odysseus on his voyage to Hades; one of the shades which accompanied Ajax and the one with which Odysseus spoke just prior to speaking with Ajax was that of Achilles, who at that point made his complaint about Hades quoted at the beginning of Book III. Er makes no mention of whom he saw with Ajax. Achilles no longer exists, alive or dead, in the new poetry or the new Socratic world. Correspondingly, the wise voyager Odysseus gains higher status. All he needed was to be cured of love of honor (a form of spiritedness), and he could live the obscure but happy life of Socrates. In this Socrates also gets his inspiration from Homer, and thus he lets us know that there may be another side to Homer's poetry than that which the tradition had popularized. At all events, the teaching of the myth is a strictly human one—man in this life, without being other worldly—can attain self-sufficient happiness in the exercise of his natural powers and only in this way will he partake of eternity to the extent a human being can do so. Otherwise stated, only the philosopher has no need of the myth.

On this note the discussion ends, Glaucon having learned his lesson in moderation, and Socrates thereby having made his *apology*—the *apology* of a man who benefits others because he first of all knows how to benefit himself.

•The difference between the mirror held to nature and the product of the imitative sophist is parallel to the difference between the lowest level of the divided line—where things are seen reflected in water or on smooth surfaces—and the wall of the cave—where the prisoners see the reflections of artifacts, only some of which have natural models. The prisoners' problem is ascending toward truth. The cause of their errors is connected with this mixture of natural and man-made things. In this discussion of poetry Socrates elaborates that problem and reveals the essential character of the cave.